



A

REPLY

TO THE

VINDICATION

OF THE

REMARKS

UPON

Mr. *LESLIE*'s First Dialogue

On the

SOCINIAN Controversy.

By the *AUTHER* of the *DIALOGUES*.

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A
R E P L Y
T O T H E

Vindication of the Remarks, &c.

S I R,

(1.) **Y**our Compliments to me of *Poor, weak Arguments, Foolish, Absurd, Ridiculous, &c.* wou'd have made me believe you had been very Angry with me, but that at the Close of your Letter you *Assure me, that you are Acted herein by no Passion.*

(2.) Yet you seem Mov'd at what I say of Mr. *Biddle*, who Reviv'd the Old Exploded *Heresy* of the *Anthropomorphits*, who held God to have a *Body*, and of the *Shape* of a *Man*, for so they understood our being made after the *Image* of God, to be meant of the *Shape* of His *Body*. Was your Concern

for Mr. *Biddle* because he was likewise a *Socinian*, and one of your *Principal Writers*? But this looks the more Suspicious and less to your Advantage, because of what you say, p. 5. *I may doubt whether God be a pure Spirit, or be only a gross Body.*

(3.) But now, Sir, as to your *Vindication*, I might give this Short Reply, That it is one General Mistake of my Answer from Top to Bottom. You begin p. 1. with Supposing, *That I admit there are Irreconcilable Contradictions in my Scheme of Faith; and therefore, in order to Support my Notions, I endeavour to Support the Credit of plain Contradictions; intimating, That we conceive of God no otherwise than as a Blind Man of Sight, i. e.*

with a mind full of *Contradictions*. And you go on with this Notion, and Repeat it often every Page, That I *Allow* of *Contradictions* in the H. *Trinity*, and *Defend* them.

(4.) If you had said I had fail'd in Rescuing our Doctrin of the H. *Trinity* from those *Contradictions* Charg'd upon it by the *Socinians*, you had only found fault with my Performance. But to say, That I *Allow* of these *Contradictions*, and *Defend* them, when I expressly *Oppose* them, and you cannot but know was the very *Purpose* and *Intent* of my Undertaking, has something in it for which I want a Proper *Name*. All I shall say, is, That if this *Mistake* was not *Wilful*, I have no *Dangerous* Adversary.

(5.) But how came you to suppose that a *Blind* Man thinks *Sight* to be a *Contradiction*? If he Thought so, he cou'd not Believe ther was or cou'd be any such thing. Ther is no *Blind* Man but *Believs* ther is such a thing as *Sight*, because others tell him so who have it. But he knows not what it is, nor can we Explain it to him. For we can Explain it no otherwise than by Allusion to some of those *Senses* which he has. And the *Senses* are so *Different* from Each other, that

the *Perception* of one cannot be Apprehended by the *Perception* of any of the others. And if we Apply the One *Strictly* to the other, we shall fall into *Contradictions*, like that I mention'd of Explaining the Progress of *Sight* by that of *Leggs*. Which is a *Contradiction* to a Man Born *Blind*, while he Conceives of *Sight* after the Manner of the Motion of *Leggs*. And it wou'd be the same *Contradiction* for the *Eyes*, as for the *Leggs*, to Move two *Yards* as soon as one. Therefore the *Blind* Man do's not Suppose that the *Eyes* move as the *Leggs* do, for then *Sight* wou'd be a downright *Contradiction* to him, and he cou'd not Believe it. But he knows this is made use of only as an *Allusion* to him. And he supposes that the *Perception* of *Sight* is quite of a Different *Nature* from the *Motion* of *Leggs*, and that ther is no *Contradiction* in it, tho' he knows not what it is.

(6.) And thus it is that we conceive of the H. *Trinity*. We know it is of a quite Different *Nature* from Three *Men*, or any Three upon Earth. Yet we must speak of it after the Manner of Men, for we can talk no otherwife. But if we will therefore Apply *Strictly* every thing of Three *Men* to the Three *Persons* in the *Deity*, we shall fall into *Manifold Contradictions*, like

like the *Blind* man who wou'd Measure *Sight* by the Motion of *Leggs*. But then, as the *Blind* Man Believes *Sight*, and that ther is no *Contradiction* in it, and is Sensible that the seeming *Contradiction* arises only from Pursuing the Parallel of *Leggs* and *Eyes* too *Strictly*: So we Believe that ther is no *Contradiction* at all in the *H. Trinity* of *God*, but that the Seeming *Contradiction* arises only from our Applying too *Strictly* what is Spoke of *God*, after the Manner of *Men*. For we have no *Words*, whereby we can Speak *Properly* of *God*. As we have None whereby to speak of *Sight* or *Colours* to a *Blind* Man.

(7.) I once Discours'd with a man Born *Blind*, and having Explain'd *Sight* to him as well as I cou'd, I at last Ask'd him what he thought it was Like? And after Considering a little he said he thought it was like a *Wheel*. A *Wheel*! Said I, why a *Wheel*? Because, said he, You tell me that *Sight* Perceives several things at once, and things *Distant* as soon as things nearer hand. Now when a *Wheel* turns swift round, I feel all the *Parts* of it almost at the same time, and the farthest Part of the *Rimm* is presently next to me. I profess I cou'd not Mend his Notion, nor find any *Word* whereby to Express *Sight* more to his Apprehension. Now then suppose the *Word Wheel* were

pitch'd upon to Express *Sight* to Men Born *Blind*. Yet they wou'd not think *Sight* to be a *Wheel*. Nor think ther were those *Contradictions* in *Sight* which might Evidently be Infer'd from its being a *Wheel*. Because they wou'd know at the same time, That it was but a Borrow'd *Word*, by way of *Allusion*, and not *Strictly* and *Properly* belonging to *Sight*, nor fully Expressive of it.

(8.) And may we not make the like Allowance as to the word *Person* when Apply'd to *God*? We have not a *Word* more *Proper*. And yet if we Apply it to *God*, with all the *Properties* and *Qualifications* belonging to *Men*, what *Mistakes* and even *Contradictions* may we fall into? Which yet will not Imply any *Contradiction* in *God*. But what so seems arises only from our Conceiving of *God* after the Manner of *Men*.

(9.) If you then ask me, why we make use of such *Words*? I answer, because we have no Better, And (as you say p. 7. of *God's* being said to *Repent*, *Grieve*, &c.) *I shou'd not dare to use them of God, if the Scripture had not done it*. If the *Scripture* had not told Us of *Three* in *Heaven*, we had Never Spoke of a *Trinity*. But when these things are *Reveal'd* to Us, we are oblig'd to Receive them.

And

And not to be *Pert* in Charging *Contradictions* upon them ; which after all arises only from the *Weakness* and *over-weening* of our own *Understanding*, and our *Mistakes* in Measuring the *Nature* of *God* proportionable to our own.

(10.) Now, Sir, I hope you will find Reason to Alter the State of the *Question*, as you put it upon me, p. 2. where you say to me, *you are not to shew that a Seeming Contradiction may be none (for who knows not that?) but that a real Contradiction may, in some Cases, be none.* Sir, I utterly Except against this State of the *Question*. It is none of Mine. I never undertook to Prove that a *Contradiction* is not a *Contradiction*. That wou'd make me as *Ridiculous* as you have call'd me. And you might *Triumph* over me as you Pleas'd, if you cou'd Fix this upon me: Did I ever say, That three *Persons* in *God* was a *Contradiction*? Have I not taken pains to shew that ther is no *Contradiction* in it? And that the *Seeming Contradiction* arises only from our Explaining it after the Manner of three *Persons* among *Men*? And have I not given Reasons against thus Explaining it? Whether my Reasons are Good or Bad is not now the *Question*. But this is Sufficient to Clear me from your Charge of Maintaining, *That a real Contradiction*

may, in some Cases, be none. Ther is no *Case* wherein a *Contradiction* is not a *Contradiction*. But ther may be a *real Contradiction* in one *Case*, which in another *Case* may be but a *Seeming Contradiction*. And I hope these ought to be Distinguisht.

(11.) I endeavour'd to Illustrate this by the Instance of the *Blind Man*. Which you thus Retort upon me, p. 2. where you Repeat these words as mine, "'Tis impossible to Explain to him what *Sight* is, so as to Reconcile it from being a *Contradiction* to him. I answer (say you) that a *True* and *Just* Explanation of it will not Contain any real *Contradiction*, 'tis from his *Mistake* alone.

Now pray, Sir, how is this an *Answer* to me? Have not I said the same? 'Tis from his *Mistake* alone. That's true. But whence came this *Mistake*? Was it not from the *Explication* was given him of *Sight*? But you say, *That a True and Just Explication of it will not contain any real Contradiction.* I have try'd my hand, and I confess I cannot give a *True* and *Just* *Explication* of *Sight* to a Man Born *Blind*. Neither have you. Which you ought to have done, when you found Fault with Mine. But it is not yet too late, pray, Sir, do it. And give such a *True* and *Just* *Explication* of *Sight*, as will not Contain

Contain any real Contradiction to the Blind Man. I mean a Contradiction in your Explanation, not in the Nature of the thing. For the Blind Man himself do's not think Sight to be a Contradiction, for he Wishes for it, and Bemoans the Want of it. But he will find real Contradictions in whatever Explanation of it (I dare say) you can give by Allusion to any of his four Senses. Yet he will not think the Fifth Sense which he wants to be any Contradiction, only that it cannot be Explain'd to him: And he Believes what he do's not Understand. Yet the Socinians make this Absurd and Ridiculous when we Apply it to the like Humbling of our Understanding as to the Incomprehensible Nature of God! The Blind Man Belives what he Knows not, nor can Understand, from the Testimony of other Men, who tell him they have Sight; which yet they cannot Explain to him without manifold Contradictions as to him. All which Hinders not his Belief of it. For he Considers his own Defect. But we will not Receive the Testimony of God, in the Revelations He has given Us of His Holy Trinity, because we Understand it not: nor can Explain it so as to be Free from all Difficulty according to our Apprehension of things! We will Consider Nothing of our own Defects, in Seeking to Compre-

hend what We own to be Incomprehensible!

If you say, That the Doctrin of the Trinity is not Reveal'd in the H. Scriptures, and that this is the Dispute. Then let it be the Dispute. That is the Subject I have Undertaken in these Dialogues. And that the H. Scriptures were so Understood in the First and Purest Ages. But as to your Objections about Contradiction, I hope I have given Sufficient Satisfaction. And that it is made yet Plainer, by these Repeated Objections of yours.

If I have us'd too many words, it is from that Difficulty you put upon your own Understanding to Mistake my Meaning, for I believe it was Plain enough to others before. But I Grudge not my Pains to YOU.

(12.) Was it from this Willingness to Mistake that you Charge me, p. 3. with saying, That a Contradiction is sometimes no Contradiction, which is what you said, say you to me. Now I dare say I never Said it, because I never Thought it. Nor can any one Think it. Why did you not Quote where I said So? Or else tell how you did Infer it. Tho' your Inferring, and my Saying are two things. Is this the way you take to make me Ridiculous?

(13.) In the same p. 3. you Expostulat, " why *God* shou'd " Impose upon a Generation " of Men born *Blind*, a long " *Creed*, of the Nature of *Light* " and *Refractions*, and *Colours*, " and a *System* of *Opticks*, " &c.

I suppose, Sir, you do not Mean this for an *Argument*. And as to the *Reflection* upon our *Creed*, you will find more *Spite* than *Sense* in it. The Doctrin of the *Trinity* was Necessary towards that of the *Satisfaction*, which is the Heart of *Christianity* as I have shew'd in the *Sixth Dialogue*, p. 3, &c. And it is Reveal'd *Short* and *Plain*, as a Great *Mystery*, not to be too *Nicely* Inquir'd into. And it had Remain'd in the Plain Native *Scripture* Terms to this Day, but for the *Arians* and other *Hereticks*, who Invented New *Distinctions* to Evade this *Article* of *Faith*, and forc'd the *Church* to follow them herein, in Order to Confute them, and Preserve the *Faith*. Yet these now Charge those *Terms* and *Distinctions* upon the *Church* !

(14.) You say to me, p. 4. " You need not pretend to " wonder, *How I can deny*, that " *what is a Contradiction in one* " *Nature*, may yet be *None in* " *another*. I shou'd Wonder " more, if I did not Deny such " an Absurdity.

And yet in the same *Page* you say to me, " You know " they (the *Unitarians*) don't " Deny that some things may " be *Contradictions*, if Affirm'd " of *Men*, which are *None* " when said of *God*.

Is not this the very *Absurdity* you *Wonder* you shou'd not *Deny*? Yet don't you *Confess* it? *That what is a Contradiction in one Nature, may be None in another*. This is *Absurd* in me! But when you say it, it is *Easie*?

(15.) I had said, That it was a *Contradiction* to *Men* that *Past* or *Future* shou'd be *Present*, but that it was not so with *God*, to whom all things are *Present*. To which you Reply p. 4.

" That it is no *Contradiction* " for a *Past* thing to be *Objectively Present* in the *Idea*— " And that so it is with *God*, " who do's not Behold the *Chaos* " as now Existing void of Form, " nor do's he Judge *Adam* and " *Eve* to be now in their first " Innocency. I doubt some are " fond of making abundance of " Needless *Contradictions*, on " purpose to keep some *Darling Absurdities* of their own " in Countenance.

Sir, This was Entering upon your *Triumph* too soon. For you are not yet Quite Escap'd from me. You by this make no more of all things being *Present* with *God*, than

than that he has a good *Memory*, and *Forgets* Nothing. But is there no more in the Case? Is his *Duration* then by *Succession* of *Time*, like Ours? Is *Part* of His *Duration* Lost, and Irrecoverably gone, like our *Yesterday*? And do's it now Remain only *Objectively present* in His *Memory*? Do's He now only *Remember* what he was many *Years* ago? If He can *Remember* or has a *Memory*, then some of His *Time* is *Past*. We say *Eternity* is but one *Instant*. But how it *Comprehends Time* within it we cannot tell. For we can speak of it no otherwise than in words of *Time*. But it will be the same when *Time* shall be no more, as it was before *Time* had a Being. Ther is no *Past* or *Future* with *God*, and things are *Present* to Him otherwise than by way of *Memory*. And if we say the same of *Men*, it will be *Contradiction* upon *Contradiction*. And so it will be if we Measure His *Eternity* by our *Time*. And as *Daring* is it to Measure His *Nature* by our *Nature*, or His *Persons* by our *Persons*. And to say this or that must be *Contradictory* in *Him*, because it is so with *Us*! When we know, That the *Words* by which we Express *Him* are *Proper* only to *Us*, and Apply'd to *Him* but by way of *Allusion*. And as *Improper* as when we speak of His *Eternity* in our *Words* of *Time*.

(15.) Your 5th Page is taken up with Arguments shewing, That tho' we know not the *Nature* of *God* perfectly, yet we know so much of it, at least *Negatively*, that we may Discover *Contradictions* to it in several Particulars, which wou'd argue *Imperfection* or *Mutability* in *God*, as as that He shou'd *Lie*, or Cease to *Be*, &c. All which I readily Grant. But then you insist that this makes against my *Position*, That we are not to Object *Contradictions* in a *Nature* we do not *Understand*. That is, wherein we do not *Understand* it, as in a *Blind-Man's* Judging of *Colours*, by which I explain'd it. I grant ther are General *Contradictions* may be said of any thing, as that the same thing should Be and not Be, at the same time, &c. But these are not *Contradictions* that Respect any particular *Nature* more than another. And my *Subject* was concerning a *Contradiction* in a Particular *Nature*, and this Infer'd from a Seeming Parallel Instance in another *Nature*. In which Case I say we must *Understand* both *Natures*, else we cannot draw an Inference from the one to the other; as a *Blind* man cannot Argue from *Leggs* to *Eyes*, nor infer *Contradictions* from the one to the other, because he *Understands* not the *Nature* of *Sight*, and therefore cannot Judge. Far less can we Judge of the *Personalities*

of God by the Personalities of Men, because of the Infinitely Greater Distance and Diversity of their Natures.

To this you say (*ibid*) That tho' we cannot Argue from the Resemblance of the one to the other, yet thus much we may Conclude in the General, That three Persons cannot be but one Person. Which I never Deny'd

“ Especially (say you to me) “ when your self had Granted “ to the Socinian, That it is a “ Contradiction to say, Three Per- “ sons (in God) are but one Per- “ son; which I represented to you “ was what the Socinians Charg'd “ your Scheme with : And there- “ fore you were bound (but “ wou'd not Attempt it) to “ shew, that this Contradicti- “ on is not Chargeable upon “ you.

But, Sir, how cou'd you say I did not Attempt it ? when at the same time you Insist that I Granted it to be a Contradiction, that Three Persons (in God) are but one Person. Then surely I did not say, that three Persons were but One Person, nor thought our Scheme Chargeable with this. In the first Dialogue p. 6. you will find the Contents on the Margin to be, That there is no Contradiction in those Terms by which we express the H. Trinity. Did I not then Attempt to shew, That this Contradiction is not Chargeable upon us ?

And your Socinian do's very little Understand the Christian Scheme, when he Charges it with holding Three Persons to be but One Person. How he will Infer it from that Scheme is one thing, but to Charge the Scheme with it is Ridiculous, when the Scheme do's expressly Deny it.

And pray Consider whether all those Arguments by which you wou'd Infer this from our Scheme, do not proceed from the Resemblance you make betwixt the Personalities of Men and of God ? Which you have Granted me ought not be done. You argue from Peter, James, and John, to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And here it is I shew you the Disparity, and that no true Arguing can lie, if we will Carry on the Comparison in all its Parts, and that Strictly and Properly. For those Words that are Proper to Peter, James, and John, are not so to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; and yet we can use none other. But then we must not Argue Strictly from the one to the other, knowing that those Words which are Proper to the one, are to be Understood but by way of Allusion (and that at an Infinit Distance) when Apply'd to the Other.

You say *ibid.* (p. 5.) I don't in this Case, Object a Contradiction in God, from a Supposition that His Nature is Resembled by Mine. Now I will undertake to shew, That

That all the *Contradictions* you Object as to the *H. Trinity*, do every one of them Proceed from this very *Supposition*. And if so, then you have Determin'd the Cause against your self. You say, That *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* cannot be one *God*. Why so? Because *Peter, James, and John* cannot be one *Man*. Is not this Arguing from the *Supposition*, That the *Nature of God* is Resembled by *Ours*? And so it is of all the Rest of your *Objections*, ther is None of them but what is Built upon this *Supposition* which you Disclaim.

Now, Sir, keep from these *Contradictions* you Object meerly from the *Resemblance* you suppose betwixt the *Nature of God*, and our *Nature*; and you and I will not Differ as to other *Contradictions* may be said of *God*, as, that he shou'd Be and not Be at the same time; That He shou'd not be *Infinite, Eternal, &c.* For these *Contradictions* are not Infer'd from any *Resemblance* betwixt *His Nature* and *Ours*.

(17.) This will Answer the *Absurdities* you wou'd Infer from our *Doctrin*, p. 6. As that it wou'd bring Men to *Scepticism*, when the *most Absurd things that can be said of God are not to be Confuted, because not knowing His Nature, we must not say any thing is in Contradiction to it— For you can't tell whether a Denyal of a Trinity be not Consistent with a Tri-*

nity, according to you, because it is about the Nature of God, and not Understanding that, we must not Object Contradictions here.

I repeat this, only to shew how *Wildly* you run *Riot*. For it is Answer'd above. Because I wou'd not have you Infer *Contradictions* in *God* from the *Resemblance* you *Suppose* (and yet Deny it) betwixt *His Nature* and *Ours*; Therefore you think Nothing whatsoever can be *Contradictory* to *God*! That is, you will have no *God* at all, Unless you can have such a one as is in all *Respects* like unto *Men*, and whose *Nature* must be Measur'd by their *Nature*! You say to me, (*ibid.*)

(18.) “ Nay since you say
“ we know not the *Nature* of
“ *Man* (perhaps he may be three
“ *Persons* and one *Man*) nor of
“ *Trees*, or a *Pile of Grass*, we
“ cannot then urge *Contradicti-*
“ *ous* about them, and so can-
“ not Argue about the *Nature*
“ of any thing— And so we
“ can Prove or be Certain of
“ Nothing.

“ Nay, we cannot confute
“ *Trans-Substantiation*, for we
“ know not the *Nature* of *Bread*
“ and *Flesh* (for *Sense* cannot
“ Reach that) and, so may
“ not Object *Contradictions* in
“ the Case.

Thus you, Sir. And you are the first Man ever I heard Talk at this Rate. It looks

like some *Discomposure*—But I will Turn it all upon your Self. Therefore tell me, Do you Pretend to Know the *Nature* and *Essence* of these things, which you say *Sense* cannot Reach? If not, (as I presume you will say, but am not Sure, considering the *Flights* you have taken already) then, Sir, it lies upon you to *Answer* all these *Extravagancies* you have put to me. For I am not *Answerable* for them more than *Your-Self*. As to your Objection of *Trans-Substantiation*, I refer you to what I have said of it in the *first Dialogue*, p. 24. &c. And for all the Rest, Look you to it.

(19.) You next Object the *Terms* in the *Creed*. Which is Answer'd before *Sect.* 13. But you Add, *Why you shou'd be Oppressed or Anathematiz'd for your Dissent from these Terms, when you Assent to the Text whence they are Infer'd?*

This is the Plea of all *Hereticks*. But it Returns upon themselves. They first Invent *Wicked* and *Heterodox Glosses* upon such *Texts*, which cannot be Detected by their saying they Assent to the *Texts*, for that is still in their own *Sense*, and they Delude many. This Obliges the *Church* to make Use of *Terms* to Obviate these false *Glosses*, and to Preserve the *Faith*. The *Devil* Quoted *Texts* to our *Bl. Saviour*, but with *Wicked*

Intent. It is the *Meaning* and not the *Letters* is the *Faith*. The *Quakers* can Repeat the whole *Creed*, and yet not Mean one Word of it in the *Christian Sense*; But all that is said of *God*, and of *Christ*, His *Birth*, *Passion*, *Death*, *Resurrection*, *Ascension*, and Coming to *Judgement*, they Turn to what they call their *Light Within*. Therefore when we Deal with these Men, we must add New *Terms* even to the *Creed*, to Obviate their Lurking *Heresie*. Instead of *Christ* we must say the *Outward Christ*, because they hold none but what is Inward, that is, their *Light within* themselves. And so in many other Cases. Therefore it is not the *Church*, but the *Hereticks* are to be Charg'd with this.

(20.) Your Third Objection p. 6. is where you say to me,

“ You cou'd not Confute the
 “ Pagan Notions of the Divine
 “ Nature your way: Supposing
 “ they held many Gods, or that
 “ ther is but one Divine Na-
 “ ture, and all the Thousands
 “ of particular Gods but a Mul-
 “ titude of *Persons* in that one
 “ *Nature* (as you suppose many
 “ Men in but one Human Na-
 “ ture) you cou'd not Confute
 “ them, by the Light of Rea-
 “ son at least, because you al-
 “ low not Contradictions to be
 “ an Argument here.

This

This is still Running upon your Old Mikake, for I do allow *Contradictions* to be an Argument here. And say, That you can find None such in the Doctrin of the H. *Trinity*. The *Pagans* added Daily to the Number of their *Gods*, and *Deify'd* a *Man* to Day, who was no *God* Yesterday. And therefore they Cou'd not think that the *Thousands* of their Particular *Gods* were *Persons* Inherent and Essential in the *Divine Nature*. for then they must have been *Always* So. And I cou'd *Confute* them by the *Light of Reason*, if they thought that any thing cou'd be *Made GOD*, in the Proper Sense. For that *God* cannot be *Made*. I wou'd *Confute* them by the same Argument I do the *Socinians* in the like Case, who say, That *Christ* was *Made GOD*, as I have shew'd in my *Preface* to the *Dialogues*, p. xxxv. So that the *Socinians* and the *Pagans* come in here upon the like Foot. Nay, the *Pagans* have the Advantage in Reason. For they did not think those whom they made *Gods* to be the *Supreme God*. But they had several *Ranks* and *Classes* of *Inferior Gods*, who had Particular *Provinces* assign'd them, Under the *One* and *Supreme God*. But the *Socinians* will have *Christ* to be the *One* and *Supreme God*, and that He was *Made* So. As the *Racovian Catechism* says, *Unum Eundemque Secum Effecit*. That

God made Him One and the Self same with Himself. On which Account they pay *Divine Worship* to *Christ*, the same as to *God* Himself. *Eo pacto quo ipsi Deo*.

Now I wou'd Desire the *Vindicatior* to tell me, How a *Socinian* cou'd Confute a *Pagan*? For the *Pagan* might say to him, if One can be *Made* a *God*, why not Another, and Another to the End of the Chapter? And he might Charge the *Socinian* with downright *Polytheism*, for if one be *made God*, He must be Different from Him that *Made* Him. And so ther are *Two Gods*. If you say He is the *Same*. Then it will follow that the *Same God* was *Made* and *not Made*; was *Before* Himself, and *Made* Himself; was *Once* not *God*, yet *Always* was *God*! And many more such like Palpable *Contradictions*.

By this time, Sir, you will be Sensible what Advantage you have Gain'd by bringing in this Argument from the *Pagans*.

(21.) You come to your *Philosophy* at the End of p. 6. which is very Extraordinary. You will not let the *Understanding* and the *Memory* be two *Faculties*, because of the *Parallel* for which I brought it. I said that the *Understanding* was Conversant about what was *Present* to it. You Answer, That things *Past* may

may be made *Present* to it, as when one is told of things *Past* which he did not Know before. But then this is the first time they were *Present* to the *Understanding*. I see no Opposition you give to me in this.

I ask'd you if the *Understanding* is said to *Forget*? You Answer here, *As much as the Memory*. But this is a *Language* of your own. The World says otherwise. If a Man *Forgets* a thing, it is Common to say, my *Memory* fails me. By which is not meant that he is a *Fool*, and has no *Understanding*. On the Contrary, as I told you, it is a Common saying, That the Greatest *Wits* have the Worst *Memories*. And we see in old men their *Memory* fail, yet their *Understanding* as Good as ever.

But you fall unmercifully upon me, (beginning of p. 7.) and say so me,

“ Nay, you are so Tenacious,
 “ that whether there be really
 “ three Faculties in the Soul or
 “ not, you say it does as well
 “ for you if it be *but Thought* so.
 “ Right or Wrong 'tis all one
 “ to you. You will hold to the
 “ Conclusion, let what will be-
 “ come of the Premises. This is
 “ true Courage!

Not so very *Stout* neither! For I see no *Danger* in't. But is it Really so, That you cannot find out the *Reason* of this? Is it for want of *Memory* or *Understanding*? But I will Try to clear your

Eye-Sight. Know then the Meaning is, That Men don't use to *Think* Contradictions. Therefore whatever becomes of your Dispute and mine about the *three Faculties* of the *Soul*, yet if it be a Common *Opinion*, (which you will not Deny) it will follow that it is no *Contradiction*, whether it be *True* or *False*. Unless you think it is *Common* to Men to believe *Contradictions*! And then Objecting it as to the *Trinity* will be no Great Matter! It will be no more than what men do every day in Twenty other things!

I gave you another *Instance*, of which you take no Notice. Therefore to Refresh your *Understanding* (I mean your *Memory*, for you know 'tis all one) I will send you to it again. You will find it p. 8. of the *first Dialogue* (which I suppose you have Read, because you made *Remarks* upon it, tho' that do's not always follow) there you see an *old saying*, before you or I were Born, *That the Soul is All in All, and All in every Part of the Body*. I suppose you have Heard of *Tota in Toto, et Tota in qualibet Parte*. Now, as to my present Purpose, I am not Concern'd whether this or the more Modern *Hypothesis* takes Place. But this is not Charg'd with *Contradiction*, it was the Common and Receiv'd *Opinion*, and Maintain'd by Great and Wise *Philosophers*. And it wou'd be a flat *Contradiction* to say the same

of *Body*, that it cou'd be in several *Places* at Once. Therefore that may be a *Contradiction* in one *Nature* which is none in Another. This is the Use I had to make of it.

I suppose, Sir, you think that the *Soul* do's not Consist of *Parts*, nor can be *Cut* or *Slic'd* in *Pieces* like a *Body*. And that it wou'd be a *Contradiction* to Affirm this of the *Soul*. Which yet is very *Easie* as to *Body*. And therefore you will Grant that a *Contradiction* cannot be Infer'd from the One to the Other, because of the Difference of their *Natures*. Far less, say I, can a *Contradiction* be Infer'd in *God*, from the *Nature* of *Man*.

Now, Sir, is this *Plain* to you? Have I Beat it into your Head at last? I wou'd not have Us'd so many Words to another. Was it your *Memory* or *Understanding* that *Forgot* it?

But pray, Sir, tell me, whether wou'd you rather be thought a Man of a weak *Memory*, or of a Shallow *Understanding*? It will be in vain for you to say they are the same. For the World makes a Difference. And if you will not *Chuse*, they will *Chuse* for you.

Therefore be not *Tenacious* (as you Advise me) for if it be but *Thought* so, your Work is done. And shew not your *Courage* in Despising this as an

Inconsiderable Argument. I have all the *World* against you, and they will *Distinguish* betwixt your *Memory* and *Understanding*. And if you will not let the One be a little *Treacherous*, they will *Think* the other very *Simple*.

(22.) Of which you have given a *Suspicion* in what you say here, That Three *Faculties* in one *Soul* will be no *Parallel* for what I brought it, Nor will it *Resemble* (say you to me) what the *Unitarians* object to you, how three *Persons* can be but one *Person*; Unless instead of three *Faculties* making but one *Soul*, you had Shewn that three *Faculties* make but one *Faculty*. I say this is strange *Forgetfulness* in you (for I accuse not your *Understanding*) When in my *Answer* to your *Remarks*, and the very place you are now upon, *Sect.* 10. p. 5. I say, *That three Faculties can no more be one Faculty, than three Persons can be one Person*. And you have Quoted me here, p. 5. saying, *That it is a Contradiction to say, three Persons (in God) are but one Person*. Yet all this you *Forget*, and here, p. 6. you Object to us *Christians*, That we hold *three Persons to be but one Person*. And immediately after in the Beginning of p. 7. you say,— *It do's not answer the Parallel in that Point (of three being but one in the same Sense) for which I bring it*. Strange *Memory* again! Did I ever bring a *Parallel* to
Prove

Prove, or did I ever say, That *Three* can be but *One*, in the *same Sense*? Have I not been Careful to Explain my self in this, That *God* is not *Three*, and *One*, in the *same Respect*? Which I grant wou'd be a *Contradiction*. And this very *Contradiction* I have fairly Fixt upon one set of Your *Unitarians*, in the *Preface* to the *Dialogues*, p. xxi. xxii. Let this *Vindicator*. Rid them of it if he can. Let him Read p. 6. of the *first Dialogue*, upon which he *Remarks*, and see whether I have not fully Express'd my self as to this of the *same Sense* or the *same Respect*? But he will not Remember it! And will go on to Charge *Contradictions*, by putting those *Terms* upon us, which we *Disown*, and Utterly *Condemn*!

(23.) In the same p. 7. he is Quarrelling with the Word *Person*, and says,

“ If you assign to the Sacred
 “ *Three* all the *Various Parts* and
 “ *Distinctions* of *Persons* in a *Pro-*
 “ *per Sense*, and for that Reason
 “ do give 'em these Characters;
 “ How can Considering men
 “ think, you don't design by it,
 “ to give 'em an Idea of three
 “ *Proper Persons* in one *Eternal*
 “ *He*.

Sir, You have *Forgot* again!
 You said, p. 5. *I don't Object* a
Contradiction in *God*, from a *Sup-*
position that *His Nature* is *Resem-*
bl'd by *Mine*. And here you *Ob-*
ject it from nothing Else but

from that *Supposition*. What else do you mean by putting the word *Proper* to *Person*? Is it not intended to denote an *Human Person*, that is, whatever is *Proper* to it? And is not this the Meaning of those *Parts* and *Distinctions* of *Persons* you speak of? That ther shou'd be the same *Parts* and *Distinctions* in the *Persons* of *God*, as in the *Persons* of *Men*. Wou'd you then have *Parts* in *God*, because it is so with *Men*? Why Else do you put in that *Word*? I doubt not as the *Unity* of the *Nature* of *God* is Infinitely more *Perfect* than the *Unity* of *Man*, so that the *Distinction* of the *Persons* of the *Deity* is likewise more *Perfect* than the *Distinctions* of the *Persons* of *Men*. But in a Manner *Ineffable Incomprehensible* to us, and not to be Measur'd by the *Various Parts* and *Distinctions* of our *Persons*. From which Method of Argument tho' you *Disown* it, yet you Cannot *Refrain*. You may as well infer *Sexes* in *God*, whom you call an eternal *He*. Then not a *She*. Do you mean this by the *Various Parts* and *Distinctions* in *Human Persons*? And for that Reason do you give these *Characters* to *God*? Or is it because you cannot Express Him otherwise? Then you must not stick too Close to your *Proper Sense*, that *God* shou'd be like our *Persons* in a *Proper Sense*, with all our *Various Parts*, &c. This

This comes too near your Friend Mr. Biddle. See *Secti. on ii.*

(24.) But if these Expressions of God are not Proper, then you Infer they must be *Figurative*. And you Quote me saying, That the *Texts* which speak of the *H. Trinity* are not *Figurative*. Dial. i. p. 25. where I was speaking of the Comparison the *Socinians* make betwixt the *Trinity* and *Trans-Substantiation*, and wou'd Infer the like *Absurdities* from the *One* as the *Other*. Upon which I shew'd several *Figures* in the *Words* of *Justitiation* of the *Holy Sacrament*, as where the *Cup* is put for the *Wine* in it, *Contineus pro Contento*, and several others. But I said ther was no *Figures* in the *Texts* which Reveal the *Holy Trinity*. What *Figure* is ther in Saying *Baptize* in the Name of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*? And that these *Three* are *One*? And that the *Word* was *God*? I desire you to Name the *Figure*. Pray did you mean any *Figure* when you call *God* a *He*? And what *Figure* was it? But I find by this Argument that you wou'd have it taken *Strictly* and *Properly*, as you Speak. And by the *Various Parts* you wou'd have in *God*, and *Properly* too, and by giving *Us* leave, p. 5. at least to *Doubt whether God be*

a pure Spirit, or be only a gross Body? I cannot help *Doubting* whether you are not an *Anthropomorphite*? I will not put it upon you. But your *Expressions* favour it. And if I Guess Wrong, yet this you will see by it, That when we Speak of *God* in *Words* Relating to *Man* (for we have none other) We must beware of taking those *Words* in a *Strict* and *Proper* Sense, else we may be Betray'd into *Gross* and *Fatal Errors*. Ther are *Words* that are not *Proper* (for want of *Better*) as in the Present Case, and yet are not *Figurative*. What *Figure* is it to say that *Eternity* is an *Instant*? Yet we are sure the *Expression* is not *Proper*; Nor can we *Mend* it, because we have no *Word* that is *Proper* whereby to Express *Eternity*, or a *Perpetual Duration* without *Succession* of *Time*.

(25.) But you Summ up the Matter in the next *Paragraph* and say, " So that the Difficulty is no other, than how a *Deriv'd Dependent Being* can be *God*? Which the *Unitarians* Insist on much.

To which I answer, First, That if the *Unitarians* Insist on this, they must Quite *Discard* the *Socinians*, and Renounce the *Racovian Catechism*, which hitherto has been their *Text*. This is shew'd *Sect. 20.* And yet you, Sir, Justify the *Socinians*

and *Unitarians* in Common, and use these Words Promiscuously, as meaning the same thing. I desire therefore that you wou'd *Distinguish* these, and let Us know what Side you are of? Let not the World be Confounded with *Two Sticks* that say they are *One*, and yet are *Direct Opposits*, and in flat *Contradiction* to each other. The *Socinians* say that the *Unitarians* are no *Christians*. And the *Unitarians* think the *Socinians* to be Rank *Idolaters*. As I have Shew'd in the *Preface* to the *Dialogues*, Sect. iii. Num. iii. p. xxxi. &c.

(26.) But now, *Secondly*, as to your *Difficulty* it self, I must Refer you back again to my *First Dialogue* on which you have made *Remarks*. There *Sect. iii.* is a *Direct Answer* to your *Difficulty*, which you have overlook'd. I told you p. 12. That if it were *Essential* to a *Man* to be a *Father* (as we say it is in *God*) the *Son* must be as *Old* as the *Father*, and yet *Derivative* from him. Of this you take no Notice.

But I gave another *Illustration*, that of *Light* and *Heat* in the *Sun*, which proceed from the *Sun*, and yet are as *Old* as it. To which you say in your *Remarks*, p. 7. That the *Light* is indeed the very *Sun* it self, so may well be as *Old*. To which

I said in my *Answer*, p. 6. That ther must be a Difference, because the *Light* can break through a little *Cranny*, which the *Sun* cannot. To this you Reply in your *Vindication*, p. 7. That the *Light* is not the whole *Sun*, only a *Part* of it, and that this *Part* may Creep through a *Cranny* &c. And you make your self very *Merry* with me upon this Occasion, and tell me, *I have derided you to my Cost!* But Sir, I must have a little of your Help still. For if a *Part* be taken from a *Body*, it is *Less* than it was. And considering what vast *Parts* of the *Sun* (if *Light* be a *Part*) have been taken from it by its Continual *Shining* ever Since it was made, it must Needs be much *Less* than it was. One wou'd think it shou'd have been *Worn out* by this time! And the *Parts* it has *Lost* by all the *Light* that ever has been in the *World*, must be much *Greater*, and many *More* than what Remains! Besides all the *Heat* too that has come from the *Sun*— For I Suppose you will Allow the *Heat* to be a *Part* of the *Sun* as well as the *Light*. And then here has been *Consumption* enough to have *Wasted* a Hundred *Suns!* And the *Sun* had *Sweated* himself to *Death* long before this by all these *Effluvia* you Speak of! You say, the *Streams* of *Light* are a *Part* of
that

that *Huge Luminous Mass*. But if it had been ten times as *Huge*, those *Streams* (if *Parts* of it) had Run it *Dry*, for they are much more than the *Fountain*! And the *River* is *Bigger* than the *Ocean* it Runs into!

Then again, if a Man takes the *Dimensions* of any *Body*, do's he not *Measure* all the *Parts* of it? Else it is not a true *Survey*. Now if the *Light* be a *Part* of the *Sun*, what a vast *Body* will this make? Even as far as the *Light* of the *Sun* Extends! And by this, the *Sun* will be as *Bigg* as the *Firmament* in which it Moves, and Contains not only the *Sun*, but the *Moon*, and Innumerable *Stars* which all Receive their *Light* from the *Sun*, besides the whole *Earth*, and all the *Air*. And they say ther are some *Stars* *Bigger* than the *Sun* it self— But that must be only *Bigger* than that *Small Part* of it we see in the *Firmament*! And it must be much the smallest *Part*, in Comparison of those other *Parts* of it which Fill the whole *Firmament*!

And will not the same Reason make the *Light* of a *Candle* a *Part* of the *Candle*? And then when a *Candle* is *Lighted*, it *Encreases* Wonderfully, and can Fill a *Great Hall*! And when it is put out, it *Looses* more *Parts* than wou'd make

ten *Thousand Candles*, and yet is never the *Lesser*, but Just the same *Candle* it was before!

Sir, suppose I *Light* you down *Stairs* with a *Candle* in my *Hand*, is *Part* of that *Candle* in your *Hand*, because you have a *Handfull* of the *Light* of it?

And will you rather *Struggle* with all this, than *Admit* of any *Parallel* which may *Reconcile* the *Doctrin* of the *Holy Trinity* to the *Apprehensions* of Men, and *Save* it from those *Contradictions* you *Charge* upon it?

You *Despise* the *Parallels* I have made use of, and have taken a great *Deal* of *Pains* to *Fix Absurdities* upon them. But whether you have not fallen into *Greater* to *Avoid* them? I leave to your *Cooler* thoughts. And whether you have not *Derided* me to your own *Cost*? And if you have taken from me the *Occasion* yet to say, *O Subtile Socinian*! And to *Return* to you the *Advice* you give me, when in the *Conclusion* of your *Farce* you say to me,

“ I heartily wish, Sir, you
 “ wou'd *Entertain* the *Coffee-*
 “ *Houses* for one year with a
 “ *Course* of your *Philosophy*, I
 “ dare promise you many *Ad-*
 “ *mirers*; and when that has
 “ *Prevail'd*, no doubt but your
 “ *Divinity* will go off.

(27.) After this you say (for I wou'd miss none of your Arguments) that ther is one Text *Pfal. 45. 7.* Where the word *Elohim* is Us'd in the *Singular* Number, (for which I will take your word at present) But you Deny not that it is Generally taken in the *Plural*. Which is Sufficient to overthrow your *Objection* that *God* is *Always* spoken of in the *Singular*, a *I, Thou, He,* &c. And as to His being Mention'd likewise in the *Plural*, you put it off with the Modern *Stile* of *Princes*, who say *We* for the Greater *Majesty*, as it is Now thought. But I believe you will not find this *Fashion* of *Stile* to have been so old as *Moses*. I remember it not in all the *History* of the *Bible*. And can any *Imagin* that *God* at the *Creation* shou'd take the *Plural* *Stile* to Himself, and say, *Let us make Man in our Image, after Our Likeness*, in Prospect only that the like *Plural* *Stile* wou'd be taken up by *Worldly Princes*? Is it not much more Probable that the *Princes* shou'd rather take it up and think it more *Majestick*, because it had been Us'd by *God* Himself? But by this *Defence* you own that *God* is spoken of in the *Plural* as well as the *Singular* Number.

(28.) In your last *Paragraph*, p. 8. You who are against im-

posing *Terms*, and for keeping Strictly to the *Scripture* Language, take upon you to impose new *Terms* of *three Infinite Minds* And this so *Percmptorily*, that you say, *Till I state my Notion* (in these *Terms*) *all my Comments on other Texts are Arrows shot at no Mark*. And as a General *Answer* to them All, you say to me,

“ Your Expositions are Precarious, or go no higher than *Arianism*, or are Obviated oft in the *Socinian* Comments; and in Answering *their* Texts you are as Modest as if you had said Nothing.

Sir, I was not asking your *Character* of my Performance. If you had given any *Answer* to what I have said, you shou'd be Welcome. But this only shews you are *Angry*, and that I have said enough to give you *Disturbance*.

(29.) Your last Demand of me, p. 8. is in these words, “ Pray, Sir, tell us whereabouts your Answer is to the Text, *of that Day knoweth my Father only*, which some cannot find among your Answer'd Texts— And no Text is more Urg'd by the *Unitarians*.

Sir, I will Gratify you all I can. Tho' if you had Read but the first *Page* of my *Fourth Discourse*

Dialogue, you might have Satisfy'd your self. For there I give one General Answer to those *Texts* which speak of the *Human Infirmities* of *Christ*, as His being *Passible*, *Improvable*, *Rewardable*, &c. Whereby *Improveable* I meant the *Text* you Mention, and that when He spake those words that *Day* might not have been *Reveal'd* to Him. For He knew not all things at once. It is said *Luk. 2. 52. Jesus encreas'd in Wisdom and Stature*, &c. All which shew His State as *Man*, but have no Relation to His *Divine Nature*, which Communicated to His *Human* as He thought fit.

(30.) You Conclude thus to me.

“ I assure you I am acted
 “ herein by no *Passion*, except
 “ it be a *Passionate* Desire of
 “ seeing our *H. Christian* Re-
 “ ligion rescu'd from the Bur-
 “ den of *Contradictions*.

Sir, if you think the *Socinians* Concern'd in *Christianity*, or *Christianity* with them; And have so *Passionate* a *Desire* to see it Rescu'd from the Burden of *Contradictions*, you wou'd do well to Consider *Seft. 11.* of my *Preface* to these *Dialogues*, for there you will find more *Flagrant* and *Irreconcilable* *Contradictions* among the *Socini-*

ans and among the *Unitarians* too, than any they Charge upon our *Doctrin*. And then Chuse which you think most Free from *Contradictions*.

(31.) But I have one word more. If you were Acted herein by no *Passion* or *Prejudice*, what needed that sly *Insinuation* you give, p. 4. of my being *Author* of that Book call'd the *Regale*, and coming in with that *Mobb-Objection* of Endeavouring to Reconcile the *Gallican* and *English* Churches? I wish I cou'd Reconcile all the *Churches* in the World. But this was going out of your way to Reach a Blow at me. This had no Relation to the Dispute in which you and I were Engag'd. It was Hall'd in perfectly by Head and Shoulders. But you have told me I must not lay it upon *Passion* or *Prejudice*. And so I forgive you.

(32.) And now, Sir, I have gone over your whole *Vindication*. I think I have left Nothing in it which I have not Answer'd. Because you Complain'd I had not Answer'd your *Remarks* fully enough. I have Us'd many more Words than I thought Necessary to *Intelligent* Readers. But I was Resolv'd to make things *Plain*, that

that you wight not *Mistake*
my Meaning (if Possible) a-
nother time. And I shall be
very willing to hear from
you again, how this Pleases
you.

I have Divided Mine into
Sessions, that I might not *Ram-*
ble, but keep Clofe to one
thing at once. If you did the
like, it wou'd save you many
Repetitions.

THE

THE

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FINIS.

Remarks on Mr. Cha. Leslie's first Dialogue on the Socinian Controversy.

S I R,

I Who am a true Scriptural Trinitarian, am far from rejecting as a Contradiction, any Doctrine that bears the genuine Stamp of Divine Revelation, merely because it has some Difficultys attending it which I cannot solve, or because I cannot frame an adequate Notion of it; nay, I firmly believe there is no Contradiction in the Scripture Account of the Holy Trinity, to the Divine Unity: But yet I must freely tell you, that I am no way assisted to answer the common Objections of that kind from what you offer towards clearing the vulgar Notions of a Trinity, from some Mens imputation of Contradiction and Inconsistency.

There may be Contradiction enough in the common Explications of that Doctrine, for ought you have said in the Matter. Nor have I ever met with less rational Satisfaction in the Point, than in your late uncharitable Dialogue. If such poor Philosophy, such shallow Reasoning, and such gross Divinity, must baffle the *Socinians*, I confess they ought to be the last who pretend to the Character of *Men of Reason*.

To their Charge of a Contradiction upon the Explication of the Trinity, you offer these things in your Defence.

1. Say you, *That may not be a Contradiction in one Nature, which is so in another*, p. 7. But here you greatly err; for a Contradiction always consists of two inconsistent Parts or Terms; and wherever those two Terms are united in any Proposition, 'tis always a Contradiction, let it be apply'd to what Nature you will. Indeed there may be something attributed to one Nature, where there is nothing inconsistent or contradictory to it; while if attributed

to another it might meet with something inconsistent, whence a Contradiction will arise in the one and not the other: but as one of the Terms alone is not the Contradiction in any Case, so where both the Parts are join'd (which is the Contradiction) 'tis always a Contradiction, and of the same size, in any Nature. I should indeed suppose you might mean thus, were it not for those ridiculous Instances you bring for the Illustration of your meaning, p. 8, 9. where you intimate, that tho' 'tis a Contradiction, for *our Legs to move two Yards as soon as one*, yet 'tis none for *the Eyes to reach a Star as soon as the Top of a Chimney*; or for *the Thoughts to go to Rome as soon as the next Street*: and gravely conclude, *Thus you see that what is a Contradiction to Legs, is none to Eyes nor to Thought*; and oft speak of the *Motion of Sight and Thought*: adding, that all the Philosophy in the World cannot reconcile *its going two Yards as soon as one, from down-right Contradiction* (for so you express it). But are you indeed so very weak as to think you move all the way to Rome, and are got thither as soon as you think of it? No, Sir, whatever hast you may be in thither, you go no faster than your Legs can carry you. And should you challenge all the Philosophy in the World? who have so little as not to know, that when you think of Rome, or any other Place, 'tis only the *Idea* of it in your Imagination which you contemplate, and not a Leap or local Motion of your Thoughts to it. In like manner, when we see the Stars, our Eyes move not up to them, but their extended Rays strike upon the Eye. I see you have a Head much fitter for entertaining and coin-ing Mysterys, than for explaining or

A defending:

dependent form. Is it a wonder you did not think sooner, that *Rome* and *Con-
stantinople* first and come into your
Head; and then since in other Cases a
letter Vessel cannot contain a greater,
nor a Nutshell hold an Ouse; you
might wonder how your little Head
should hold such great Cities; and with
the same Philosophy inter, that what
is a Contradiction to *Nutshells* is none
to *Heads*, and challenge all Philosophy
to reconcile it.

2. You say, *No Contradiction can be
charg'd in any Nature we don't understand*,
p. 7. For which Reason, you say,
*we must not object Contradictions in the
Incomprehensible Nature of God, from
comparing it with our own.* I should
grant this, in an Object of which we
have no Knowledge at all: but surely
if I have some, tho' a partial Knowledge
of the Infinite God, I may discern what
is contradictory to that little Knowledge
of him. Nor is any thing more usual
or just, than to deny such or such a
Doctrine, because incompatible to
the Divine Attributes, to his Spiritua-
lity, Eternity, Goodness, &c. though
perhaps some of these are not plainer
nor better known than the Divine U-
nity. So that one may as well per-
ceive some things to be contradictory
to the Divine Unity, as we do others
to be so to his Purity, and Spiritua-
lity, &c. for why should his Unity be
thought the only obscure Attribute a-
mong Christians? And therefore there
is no more Caution due here than in
all other Reasonings from other Di-
vine Perfections known but in part.

Nay, you your self frankly grant,
that we may perceive some things to
be a Contradiction when affirm'd of
God: for you say, p. 6. that 'tis a *Con-
tradiction to say, three Persons are but
one Person*; and you are not ignorant
(or if you be, you are not most fit to
write in this Controversy) that the U-
nitarians take this to be the very case,
viz. that you make *three Persons of one*

Person, whatever you say, for they
imagine, that God Almighty, in the
complete notion of God, is but one
Person, express'd by single personal
Notes, *I, Thou, or He.* They fancy
you pray to him as one Person, when
you address thus, *O Thou Lord, &c.*
They don't observe any to cry, *O ye
hear us, &c.* But it that be your
meaning, pray consider if you do well,
by using the single Pronoun, to give
'em occasion to suspect, that you take
God for one single Person, when you
may so easily amend it, by saying al-
ways, *O Ye* in the Plural. *They* are
ready to say, that when you prove
the *Son* or *Spirit* to be a Person, you
do it from such Personal Notes as shew
each of 'em to be one *He*: and that if
under one *He, Me, Thou, &c.* (by which
God Almighty is perpetually express'd
in Scripture) three *He's* are includ'd
(for instance, if the Words, *no Gods
beside me, mean none before us three*) then
how shall they be sure, that under
the Person of *Son*, or *Spirit*, tho' spo-
ken of as one *He* each, there may
not be many Persons intended by you?
Now you'll do well to shew, that God
is not one *He* or Person, or that
there are not three Persons in him in
a proper Sense, such as the Proofs
some bring for the three Persons do
mean, if they prove any thing. With-
out this, you did not well in making so
liberal a Concession, *viz.* that 'tis a
Contradiction for three Persons to be
but one Person, if you hold both.

3. You advance this odd Paradox,
That if the Doctrine of the Trinity
*be a Contradiction, it could not be an
Invention*; annexing this shrewd rea-
son for it, *For who could invent a Con-
tradiction?* p. 24. as if no Error
(which ever implies a Contradiction
to some Truth) can be an Invention:
whereas all Errors are nothing else
but Inventions; and a *Socinian* will
say, as you represent him, that you
run into these Contradictions, by mis-
taking

taking the holy Text. Whether you do mistake it or not, or whether you get by the mistake or not, I meddle not; but 'tis a fair account, how 'tis possible and easy for Contradictions to be invented: and your saying you don't mistake the Text, be it ever so truly said, is not to the purpose, since they, believing you do mistake, can satisfy themselves how it might arise, and are no way tempted to think it better than an Invention, merely for its seeming to them a Contradiction.

But tho you have said so little to the purpose against the Objection of a Contradiction in the point; yet, as I said, I argue not upon that head, and therefore leave it,

To consider what Notion you'll give of the Trinity: for indeed till Men know *what Trinity* in God you mean, 'tis in vain to prove any more than a Trinity *in general*, which is not deny'd. You offer us some Parallels and Images to help our Conceptions, but very inconsistent ones. One while 'tis a Trinity like *three Faculties* of one Mind, and another while 'tis like a Trinity of three Men or *Minds*; which two are just as opposite as three Persons, and one Person, which you say is a Contradiction: so that both cannot be true Images of the same thing.

1. You resemble it often by three Faculties (that is, three Operations) of the one Soul, p. 14. where you say, *the Understanding is the Father Faculty*; the Memory is *begotten by it*, and the Will *proceeds* from both. This, you say, is an *Image of the several Persons of the Deity*, p. 30. Now tho you are out in your Account of the Nature and Pedigree of the Faculties, when you make the *Memory* another Faculty, which is but an Act of the Understanding, and so is no Image of a second Person; and when, supposing it another essential Faculty, you say, 'tis begotten by the *Understanding Faculty*, whereas 'tis only the Exercise of the Memory that the Understand-

ing can occasion, and not the *Principle*, which is before any Act of the Understanding: yet when you have pleas'd your fancy ever so much, with these pretty Jingles; this is nothing to the *Socinians*, it only shews, how three Operations of a Mind may be in but one Person, not how three Persons may be in one Mind; unless the divine Persons are but so many Operations or Thoughts. Besides, they will ask such *Allegorical Trinitarians* (for I assure you in this Case, you are not charg'd with keeping *too much to the Letter of the Text*, as you pretend, p. 25. *but too little*, in making three such distinct Agents, as Father, Son, and Spirit, to dwindle into a thin Figure or *Propositiu*) whether *Arius*, or *Socinus*, or any *Unitarians* ever deny'd such a Trinity: Were they such Fools as not to believe, God knows and loves himself? (And can't he do this without being 3 Persons, which is done by every single finite Person?) If this be eternal *Generation* and *Procession*, they are for it; and they have been barbarously us'd if this was all the Charge against 'em, which all know they were clear of, and that they believ'd God has somewhat answering to our three Faculties.

You pretend, p. 17. that notwithstanding the Unlikelihood of three Faculties to three Persons, you must yet use the term *Persons*, because we must not alter the Phrase of Scripture; and yet the Scripture has no such Phrase at all as three Persons in one God. Your alledging the Words, *the Image of his Father's Person*, is here pertinent for proof of three Persons in God; it only proves God the Father to be a Person, which none deny. Tho the word *ὑποστάσις* signify'd, then, *Substance* not *Person*, Heb. 11. 1. you of all ought to give a better reason than this for using the Terms, *three Persons*, of God; because (if I mistake not) at the end of Mr. G's *Deists Annual* you have said, that the word *Persons*, ac-

ply'd to God, is us'd in a Sense *infinitely different* from what it means when us'd of Men. Now if it be *infinitely different*, 'tis at the widest distance possible; and nothing can be more unfitly made use of than such Terms as express all the Unlikeness possible to the thing intended. 'Tis a ready way to deceive Men, to use terms that are the farthest off of any we can devise, from expressing the true meaning: 'tis better saying nothing of God, than what begets corrupt *Ideas* of him.

However, will this sort of Trinity, like to three Operations of Man's Mind, accord with the Scripture Trinity of the Father, Son, and Spirit? who have such distinct Parts and Agencies assign'd 'em, as cannot be so much as shadow'd out by our three Faculties. You grant the *Father* was not incarnate, but the *Son*. Can the Understanding be *incarnate*, and *sent*, and *humbled*, &c. and not the *Will*? Are not the three Faculties always in the same human Mind, which is incarnate without Division? Do you teach us, that the divine Nature is incarnate, without its Understanding, or *Father Faculty*? No, there must be more Distinction than this between the *not-incarnate Father* and the incarnate *Son*.

Besides, don't you think the *Son of God* knows himself, and retains that Knowledge, and loves himself? And if so, then, according to you, he is the *Person knowing*, and the *Person known*, *loving and lov'd*, as you learnedly distinguish, p. 30. And this will make three such Persons in each Person, by reflecting on himself: for this seems to be your Argument, A Man knows himself, *ergo* he and himself are two Persons. And at this rate a good Wit may allegorize all the Absurdities of the *Alcoran* into fair Meanings, and silence all your Objections against it, tho' the vulgar People be still left to their own gross Conceptions, while

they take the literal and obvious meaning: nor do you bui'd upon such a Trinity, like that of three Faculties; for you have another Scheme which fits your Notions better. Therefore,

2. You resemble the Trinity by three *human* Persons in the same human Nature; but then lest the *Socinians* infer, that three *divine* Persons will in like manner be three Gods, as three human Persons are three Men, you will not allow it to be *strictly true*, to say, *Two or three Men*, when so many human Persons are spoken of, p. 6. but think there may be many human Persons in the *same one Nature*. And yet in short, you tell the *Socinian*, that if he *would allow that several Persons might partake of one divine Nature*, as he does allow they do of one human Nature, the *Dispute was at an end*, as to the Substance of it. Eut Sir, the *Unitarians* do not allow one and the same Nature to have many Persons in it; they judg every Man has a particular Nature and Substance of his own, in which none partakes, only that others have such another like Nature to his: they cry, human Nature in general is a mere *Ens Rationis*, a Notion of the Mind arising from the comparing one Man's Nature with another.

However, if three divine Persons be like three human Persons as to their Unity of Nature; then I doubt they will, in consequence hereto, be deem'd to be *three infinite divine Minds*, as three human Persons have three finite Minds, let 'em be ever so much one in their *Nature*, or Kind. And if three divine Persons should as properly be accounted three Gods, as three human Persons can (in strict Speech) be accounted three Men, and are as truly three infinite Minds or Spirits, as three Men are three finite Minds, there is a sad end of the dispute indeed. But on the other hand, if three
Men

Mēn (or human Persons) in the same one single Nature or Mind, be a Contradiction, then you give the Unitarians too much occasion to think the like of your Notions of the Trinity, by making this Parallel.

Moreover, If God teach us to number Men by *two, ten, &c.* and yet in opposition to such Plurality, tells us, there is but one God, or rather that *God is but One, unus, or ēs,* it warns us that his Unity is inconsistent with such a plurality of Persons as is in your human Nature. You add, p. 17. *If we say, there is not more than one Human Nature, we cannot say, there is more than one Divine Nature, tho' several Persons partake of it.* Now this shews your Notion of the Unity, which you sacrifice to that of a Trinity: and upon this Notion of several infinite Minds, your Scheme is built; as your Arguments for the eternal Generation of the Son, and Procession of the Holy Ghost, do manifest: for you tell us, God must needs generate and produce other Persons on these accounts.

1. Because 'tis a Perfection in Man to propagate: p. 31. *We see Trees spring from Trees, Beasts, Fish, Fowl, and Man propagate their Kind; and shall God be barren?* say you, and hook in a figurative Text, *Isai. 65. 9.* according to the vulgar Translation, to back you; and truly you wanted a better Authority for such a Paradox. For you ought to know, that Man's Propagation is so far from being an absolute Perfection, that 'tis founded in his Infirmitie; he need not be multiply'd, but for want of others to succeed him when dead, or to aid and assist him while living. And as Angels, who are more perfect, do not propagate, I suppose; so neither will Men, when they come to a more perfect State: this will cease with their present Imperfections. It seems then the nearer to God, the less there is of this Propagation.

But why must God be barren, for not propagating? Are not Angels and Men his Offspring? and he the Father of the whole Creation? Would you have the Almighty propagate as thick as the Trees? I doubt you'll think him else, to be comparatively barren. The reason you give for not multiplying Persons and Productions, or Communications in God [*viz. If it be infinite, it can be no more than one; and to infinite Productions nothing can be added; but human Productions may be repeated, because finite*] should be consider'd as it seems to lie against any infinite Production in him at all. For it may be objected, that many infinite Productions are no more absurd than many infinite Persons; and that if infinite Person may be repeated, and can have an Addition, why not other Infinites?

2. Because *God would be stinted in his Happiness, if there were not a Person (you must mean another Person) to communicate all his Thoughts to;* and this must be an infinite Person, for say you, *nothing but infinite can contain infinite.* See more to this purpose, p. 32. And a little before, you argue for your point, from Man's want of some to converse with; else his Life is a Burden, say you. *Who would be content to live, if there was never a Man in the World but himself?* Such a solitary indigent Being you suppose a great *Jehovah* to be, that without Company he cannot be happy. What a base ignoble Notion is this of that perfect Being? as if infinite Wisdom and all Perfection could want any thing more! and can't be happy, unless it be multiply'd into two Minds. Thus you make him barren indeed, while you talk of the divine *Fecundity*; and tempt the Unitarians to think, that three such Persons as you would make 'em, are not so great as their One, *Self-sufficient, Eternal Mind.*

By these things you discover your Mind plainly, that you are for three *Infinite Minds* or Spirits; and that by the divine *Generation* of a *Son*, you don't mean only his *Self-Reflection*, but a Production of another infinite Mind: for otherwise you talk inconsistently; nor is there any shadow of resemblance between Man and God in the case which you argue upon. For you can't mean, that Man is solitary and miserable for want of conversing with his *own* Mind, but for want of another Man to discourse with: and accordingly must mean, that God could not be happy neither, without another infinite *Mind*. Nor does any deny him to contemplate himself, that you need argue for that against the *Socinians*; so that your meaning is plain. You do well to have two Schemes in readiness, one a Trinity of *Facultys*, which serves to explain the *Unity*; the other of three *Minds* (each with those three *Facultys*) which makes out a sufficient Trinity. This *latter* you and others make use of when you explain the *Incarnation*, because 'tis hard shewing the *Son's Nature* or *Mind* to be incarnate, and not the *Father's*, if it be the same particular individual Mind that is both *Father* and *Son*; the former is us'd in explaining the Trinity in General, and *in Thesi*. Now if these two happen to be inconsistent taken together, you cannot help that, because to be *three Minds* and yet but *one*, is hard to reconcile.

In my Mind you needed not to insist on the Authority of the Heathenish Philosophers about the divine *fecundity*, and a *Trinity* in God; since your Adversarys have been so willing to own you to be *Paganish* enough in your Notions. And as you own there is some Corruption in the *Pagan* Notions of these Matters, so they imagine there is *more* than you apprehend. Vid. *Platonism unveiled*.

Let me only remark one thing

more, *viz.* That when you illustrate the Union of the Divine Nature to the Human in *J. Ch.* by the Union of Man's Soul to his Body, *p. 51.* you don't account well for the Communication of the Propertys of the two Natures. You (the contrary to the *Alexandrian* and best Copy) read that Text, *Acts 20. 28.* of *God's Blood*, and think what was done in the Man, may be said as truly of the united God; as *Man is said to eat*, &c. when it *belongs only to the Body*. Whereas in *this last* Speech the Propertys of the Body are not at all attributed to the Soul, as these of the humane are by you to the *divine Nature*. To say, *God shed his Blood*, or *was Flesh*, or *made Flesh*, is answerable to such Expressions, as *the Soul drinks*, the Soul is made Body, &c. And if we never speak so notwithstanding the personal Union in Man, then it may seem hard to justify such Expressions, as *God's Blood and dying*, &c. by any such personal Union of the two Natures, as never is a ground for such Communication of Propertys, in the Instance you parallel it by.

You say nothing for the *Procession* of the H. Spirit (as distinct from Generation, which is a great Article of Faith) from Scripture, only that he *proceeded from the Father*, *John 15. 26.* or *goes forth*. So all Gifts do, and Christ *proceeded from the Father too*, *Ch. 2. 22.* &c. *14. 28.* and *he proceeded from the Father*, *Mark 10. 45.* Is that all the ground you would shew for such a distinct Article?

To conclude, Unless you state your Notion more clearly, what Trinity you will maintain, 'tis in vain to cap Texts about you know not what. 'Tis easy to bend a Phrase divers ways. Unless you fix your Notion of a Trinity more distinctly, had you not better leave Men to believe only some Trinity in general, tho they can't well

well tell what? And tho you may think there is no such vast difference between believing and not believing, one knows not what in particular, as that Men should damn and hareticate each other for it; yet certainly 'tis better to be content with this *little implicit Faith*, than to go about explaining what you cannot. For when all's done, a Man's *Faith* is not his Words but his Sense and *Meaning*; and he who says a large *Creed* but means *nothing*, believes no more nor makes any more use of it, than he who denies it all, let him boast never so of his Faith.

And when you have brought a Text or two for Christ's being call'd *God*; and suppose it to be the Supreme God that is united to the Man Ch. J. yet if the *Unitarians* say, 'tis God the *Father*, as they gather from *John* 14. 10. who was *manifest in that Flesh*, and so the *Father and he be one*, in as near Union as you imagine of a Second person; and that therefore he is call'd, as you say, the *Everlasting Father*, *Isai.* 9. 6. which they think gave great virtue to his Performances; what are you the nearer?

You'll do great service indeed, if you satisfy the *Unitarians* Scruples; not by corporeal resemblances of the *Trinity*, from 3 (or 4) Dimensions or Postures of a Body; or of the eternal *Generation*, by the *Light* (which you call an *Effect* of the Sun, but is indeed the very Sun it self, so may well be as old) nor by vain Boasts of the early *Fathers* (so often yielded up to the *Arians*) nor by concealing their strongest Objections. Shew 'em that they have no ground to imagine Two or Three Gods (or *Infinite Minds*) to be imply'd in your Scheme of the *Trinity*, as they have fancy'd, not so much from the Expressions *God of God*, and *one equal to God* (and so far not the very same) in divine Per-

fections; as from the *Nature of your Scheme* it self; as when you hold the divine Nature to be personally united to Man, but yet not the *Father*; as if, say they, he was not in that divine Nature that is incarnate, but another. Also that the *Divine Nature* and the *Three Persons* are the same [else say your own side, there will be a *Quaternity*, viz. Three Persons, and one Nature besides: see *Le Blanc Theol. de Dei simplicitate*, p. 100.] yet the three Persons are not incarnate, tho the divine Nature (which is the same thing) be: That tho there be three Persons in the divine Nature alone, yet when that Nature is join'd to another intelligent Nature, 'tis all but one Person. Indeed two or three infinite *Minds* would easily solve all this; but then the *Oxford Decree* 1695. has declar'd that impious and heretical. No doubt you'll do it another way: and having also made it appear, that there is no such difficulty in supposing a begotten Being to be *self-existent* and independent; or else that he should be Supreme God and the *first Cause*, tho he was not self-existent but dependent; and may have all the Perfections of God, tho he have not that of unbegotten Self-existence: Then I say you'll go on smoothly with your Texts; but if you silently grant 'em, that these are really Contradictions, and really chargeable on your Opinions, you'll not wonder if they conclude, all those human Comments on God's Word, which support 'em, to be erroneous. That you therefore, Sir, may not lose your Labor, nor they the Benefit of it; pray be so kind as to take this Advice, from one who truly wishes to see the *Unitarians* Errors detected, and that you may write to better purpose for the *Church*, than you are said to have written for the *State*.



Mr. LESSLIE's Answer to the *Remarks* on his first *Dialogue* against the *Socinians*.

Since the *First Dialogue* was Printed ther is come out a *Socinian Sheet* against it, Intituled, *Remarks on Mr. Charles Leslie's first Dialogue on the Socinian Controversy*. And I think it Proper to take notice of it here, for it may help to Illustrat more at Large what is there said in short. And because I hear some say, it is well Wrote, and that many lay Strefs upon it.

(1.) First I Observe that this *Remarker* has not kept up to that Character the *Socinian Writers* give themselves (but without much Reason, as I have shew'd in these *Dialogues*) of being the fairest *Adversaries*, and an Example to all others of Managing *Controversy* without *Heat* or *Passion*, or *Personal Reflections*. For he has treated me in a very *Rough Manner*, calling the Instances I bring *Ridiculous*, p. 1. And that I am *Paganish* in my Notions, p. 6. And says, p. 1. *If such poor Philosophy, such shallow Reasoning, and such gross Divinity, must baffle the Socinians, I confess they ought to be the last who pretend to the Character of Men of Reason.*

But notwithstanding all this *Contempt* of what I have said, I cannot but think it has given him some Trouble, because it has made him so *Angry*. For it is *Losers* that have leave to Talk at this Rate. And as you shall see him Talk afterwards.

(2.) My Argument was, That we cannot Charge any thing to be a *Contradiction* in one *Nature*, because

it is so in *Another*, unless we understand both *Natures*. Because a *Nature* we understand not cannot be Explain'd to us but by Allusion to some *Nature* we do understand. And ther is that Difference in *Natures* that no *Allusion* will lie betwixt them, that is, none that is *Proper*, that will come up to the thing, or give a Person who Knows not the *Nature* a true *Idea* of it, or even Reconcile it from *Contradiction*, while he Considers the *Nature* he do's not Understand, by way of *Allusion* to another *Nature* which he do's Understand.

(3.) To Illustrate this I gave several *Instances*, of which this *Remarker* has p. 1. pick'd out two to shew his *Wit* upon. One is, That if a Man cou'd he Suppos'd to be without *Thought*, it wou'd be *Impossible* to make *Him* Apprehend what it was, or the *Progress* of it, as from Hence to *Rome* in an Instant, &c. It is Common to say to a Man that is *Musing*, *Where are you?* And to Answer I was at *Rome*, or such a *Place*. Now supposing any one (if it were possible) not to know what *Thought* was, he wou'd Apprehend your *Body* was Remov'd to *Rome* and Back again as soon as you cou'd speak. And by *Allusion* to the *Motion* of *Body*, this cou'd not be Reconcil'd to him from being a Flat *Contradiction*, that any thing cou'd move a Thousand Miles as soon as a *Yard*.

In answer to this the *Remarker* tells you p. 1. *That when you think of Rome or any other Place, 'tis only the Idea of it in your Imagination which you Contemplate,*

templat, and not a Leap or Local Motion of your Thoughts to it.

Who knows not this that has any Thought? But upon the Supposition that a Man did not know what Thought was, he cou'd have no Apprehension of it but as of a Local Motion. And what you call *Idea* he wou'd fancy to be some *Horse* or *Coach* that Carry'd you very *Swiftly*; which yet wou'd not solve the *Contradiction* as to him, because the *Swiftness* of the Motion, suppose it a *Cannon Bullet*, cannot go two yards so soon as *One*.

(4.) But because it may be too Extravagant to suppose a Man without Thought, tho' some have very Little; and *Suppositions* are Allow'd in Argument even of what never was; yet I Insist not on this, but have given another Instance which is *Fact*, and daily before us, that is, of a Man Born *Blind*. And how you cou'd give him any Notion of *Sight*, or Explain to him how the *Eye* can Reach a *Star* as soon as the Top of the *Chimney*? He can feel his *Eye* with his *Hand*, and that it is there *Fixt* and do's not go out of his *Head*, how then can he *Imagin* it gets a Thousand Miles off in an Instant, while he Feels it do's not *Stir* at all? He can have no *Notion* of this but by *Allusion* to some other of his *Senses* which he has. And by the word *Reach*, how the *Sight* can *Reach* a *Star*, he fancies *Arms* or *Legs*, that being all the way by which he can *Reach* to any thing. And then knowing that the *Motion* of *Legs* or *Arms* must go one yard before it go's two, he takes your Description of *Sight* to be not only some *Strange* and *Wonderful* thing, which he will readily Grant; but he will Insist that it is a flat *Contradiction*. And therefore that he must not *Believe* it. And it is Impossible to Explain it so to him as to Reconcile it from being a *Contradiction* to him.

To this says the *Remarker* very Ingeniously, when we see the *Stars*, our *Eyes* move not up to them, but their extended *Rays* strike upon the *Eye*. But the man Born *Blind* wou'd say, Nothing *Strikes* upon my *Eye*, for then I shou'd *Feel* it. And he knows nothing what you mean by *Rays* or by *See*. Nor cou'd think of any other way but that the *Eye* must get up to the *Star*, or the *Star* come down* to the *Eye*. And your talking of *Rays* will not Solve the *Contradiction* one bit as to him. Nor can he be any otherwise Convinc'd than by Persuading him that what is a *Contradiction* in one *Nature* he understands, must not be Concluded to be so in another *Nature* he do's not understand, and that the *Nature* of *Sight* is such as that no *Allusion* from any other of his *Senses* can make him Apprehend what it is. Nothing but this can Silence his Murmuring about *Contradiction*.

Is it not Reason then that our Murmuring about *Contradiction* in the *Nature* of *God* shou'd be *Silenc'd*, seeing it can be told us no otherwise than by such *Words* and *Allusions* as are Proper to *Man*; And that the *Divine Nature* is Infinitely more *Distant* and *Diverse* from the *Nature* of *Man* than one of our *Senses* is from another? And as the *Contradiction* the *Blind-man* conceives in the *Nature* of *Sight* is Caus'd by his comparing it with the *Motion* of his *Legs* or *Arms*, and that occasion'd by improper *Words* we must use to him, all others being *Unintelligible* to him but what have *Allusion* to some of the *Senses* he has: So in like manner those *Contradictions* we Conceive in the *Nature* of *God* are all Occasion'd by the improper *Words* which must be us'd to us in Expressing of His *Nature*, all *Words* being totally *Unintelligible* to us, which have no *Allusion* to something we understand. And thus we Conceiving
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of God after the manner of Men, make all those things to be *Contradictions* in God which in our Conception of the Words are a *Contradiction* to Men. As that several Persons shou'd not be several Men, and that the Father shou'd not be before the Son, &c. Whereas these Terms of *Father, Son, Persons*, &c. are not proper to the Nature of God, (tho' the most Proper we can use or understand) And therefor we are not to Conceive of them in the manner they are us'd and apply'd to Men, nor draw Consequences from them as we do when these Words are Apply'd to Men. Otherwife we shall Run into the like *Contradictions* as the *Blind-man* about *Sight*.

This will throw off all that the *Remarker* says of Inferring three Gods from the Term of three Persons, because it is so among Men. He talks like a *Blind-man* of Colours, of things which he must Confess he do's not understand; yet will be inferring *Contradictions* in them. He owns he cannot speak Properly of them, yet finds fault with the Terms we use, because they are not Proper, tho' he can find none more Proper.

(5.) He may as well say, That God is not *Eternal*, because we have no word to Express *Duration* higher than the word *Beginning*, and ther can be no *Beginning* in *Eternity*.

He may say it is a *Contradiction* that all things shou'd be *Present* with God (which yet he will not Deny to be an undoubted Verity) because it is a *Contradiction* to Men, that the *Past* or *Future* shou'd be *Present*, because then a thing wou'd be *Past* and not *Past*, *Future* and not *Future* at the same time.

These and other things I mentioned in my first *Dialogue*, but the *Remarker* takes no notice of them, nor will own the *Absurdity* of infer-

ring *Contradictions* in God from *Contradictions* in Man, occasion'd by the *Improper Terms* we are Forc'd to make use of to Express God after the manner of Men.

(6.) But he has laid his Strefs upon this Instance I brought of the *Blind-man*. And here he thinks he has an Advantage of me. And I am willing to join Issue with him upon it, That if he can find out any Words that are Proper, whereby to Express the Nature of *Sight* to a Man Born *Blind*, and that he will give the *Blind-man* leave to draw Consequences and infer *Contradictions* from such Words according as he understands them; then I will undertake to solve all the *Contradictions* that he pretends to muster up in the Terms whereby we Express the Holy *Trinity*. And let him shew any Difference betwixt these Cases if he can, only this, That far greater *Disparity* ought to be Allow'd as to the *Propriety* of Words when Terms belonging to Men are spoke of God, than when what belongs to one of our *Senses* is Apply'd to another.

(7.) And now let the Reader Judge what occasion he had of thus Insulting me, p. 1.

“ But are you indeed (*says he to me*)
 “ so very weak as to think you move
 “ all the way to *Rome*, and are got thi-
 “ ther as soon as you think of it? No,
 “ Sir, whatever hast you may be in thi-
 “ ther, you go no faster than your
 “ Legs can carry you. And shou'd
 “ You Challenge all the *Philosophy* in
 “ the World? Who have so little
 “ as not to know, that when you
 “ think of *Rome*, or any other Place,
 “ 'tis only the *Idea* of it in your I-
 “ magination which you Contem-
 “ plate, and not a Local Motion of
 “ your Thoughts to it. In like man-
 “ ner, when we see the Stars our
Eyes

“ Eyes move not up to them, but
 “ their Extended *Rays* strike upon
 “ the Eye. I see you have a Head
 “ much fitter for entertaining and
 “ coining Myſteries, than for Explai-
 “ ning or Defending ’em. It’s a
 “ wonder you did not think rather,
 “ that *Rome* or *Conſtantinople* ſhif-
 “ come into your Head: And then
 “ ſince in other Caſes a leſſer Veſ-
 “ ſel cannot contain a greater, nor
 “ a Nut-ſhel hold an Houſe; you
 “ might wonder how your little
 “ Head ſhould hold ſuch great Ci-
 “ ties; And with the ſame Philoſo-
 “ phy infer, that what is a Contradi-
 “ ction to *Nutſhels* is none to *Heads*,
 “ and Challenge all Philoſophy to Re-
 “ concile it.

Now, Reader, has he not fully un-
 derſtood me, do you think, and an-
 ſwer’d me ſmartly?

(8.) But will you ſee him freely
Confefſing what he thus *Ridicules*?
 He ſays in this ſame p. 1.

“ Indeed there may be ſomething
 “ attributed to one Nature, where
 “ there is nothing Inconſiſtent, or
 “ Contradictory to it; while if at-
 “ tributed to another it might meet
 “ with ſomething Inconſiſtent, whence
 “ a *Contradiction* will ariſe in the
 “ one and not in the other.

Now this is the whole of what I
 have been contending for. I deſire
 no more of him. And having gran-
 ted this, how can he Deny that what
 is a *Contradiction* in one Nature, that
 is, of *Man*, may not be ſo in another
 Nature, that is, of *God*? Or are
 ther any two *Natures* more *Diſtant*
 and more *Different* than the Nature
 of *God* and of a *Creature*? Or do
 we underſtand the Nature of *God*
 more *Perſectly* and *Clearly* than our
 own Nature? Is it not Reaſonable
 then what I ſaid, as he Quotes my
 words, p. 2. *That we muſt not ob-*

*ject Contradictions in the Incomprehen-
 ſible Nature of God, from Comparing
 it with our own.* Becauſe we Under-
 ſtand not his Nature. To which the
 Remarker ſays,

(9.) “ I ſhould grant this, in an
 “ object of which we have no know-
 “ lege at all: But ſurely if I have
 “ ſome, tho’ a partial knowledge of
 “ the Infinite God, I may diſcern
 “ what is Contradictory to that lit-
 “ tle knowledge of him. Nor is any
 “ thing more uſual or Juſt, than to
 “ Deny ſuch or ſuch a Doctrin, be-
 “ cauſe Incompatible to the Divine
 “ Attributes, to his Spirituality, Eter-
 “ nity, Goodneſs, &c.

To which I reply, That the Nature
 and Attributes of any thing are Dif-
 ferent. We may know the *Attri-
 butes*, when we cannot know the *Nat-
 ure*. As we may ſee the *River*,
 but cannot Reach the *Spring* whence
 it flows. And this Diſpute of the
Trinity is not about any of the *Attri-
 butes of God*, but Concerning His ve-
 ry Nature and *Effence*, and how His
Being is Compos’d, (if I might uſe
 that Word) of which I may ſay we
 are totally Ignorant, it is a *Light* In-
 acceſſible to us, we know Nothing
 of it at all. And therefore cannot
 Charge *Contradiction* in the *Revela-
 tion* that is given to us of it. If we
 look Directly upon the *Sun* in its
 Strength, we ſee Nothing at all,
 it Strikes us *Blind*. But if we turn
 our Backs, we Diſcern the *Light*
 that comes from it. The *Attributes*
 of *God* are the *Rays* of the *Sun*, but
 His Nature is the *Sun* it ſelf, we
 cannot Look upon it. It is Utter
Darkneſs to Us, through the Ex-
 ceſs of the *Light*. We can Diſcern
 Nothing at all in it, or ſay it is
Thus or *Thiſ*, or that *This* or *That*
 is *Contradictory* to it. Alas, how
 little do we know of our own Na-
 ture;

ture? We know it only by the *Effects* and the *Qualities* we find in our Selves. But what it is in its self we cannot tell, we are Exceedingly in the *Dark*. And so as to the *Nature of Trees, Flowers, Plants &c.* We find by Experience such *Effects* and *Virtues* in them, but we know not the *Nature* or *Essence* of them, no not of a Pile of *Grass*, why of that *Colour, Shape, or Vertue*. How then can we Know what the *Nature of God* is? Or can we say it is not Rightly *Reveal'd* to Us in the *Holy Scripture*? Do we Know of what *Composition* our own *Souls* are made? Or how they *Act* in Us? Do we Know any thing at all of the *Soul* but by the *Effects*? We Know we *Think*, therefore we Conclude we have a *Soul*, but what that *Soul* is in its self, we Know not. Yet we wou'd Know the *Nature of God*!

(10.) This brings me to a *Criticism* of the *Remarker* upon the *Parallel* I made use of concerning the three *Faculties* of the *Soul*. He says, p. 3. That the *Memory* is not another *Faculty*, but only an *Act* of the *Understanding*. Now I thought that the *Understanding* was only *Conversant* about what was then *Present* before it. And that the *Memory* brought back *Past* things, and so made them *Present* to the *Understanding*. Whence a Man may have a good *Understanding*, and yet a bad *Memory*. Do we say of the *Understanding* that it *Forgets*? I take *Truth* or *Falshood* to be the *Objects* of the *Understanding*. But is *Love* or *Hatred* so? A Man may have an *Aversion*, and not know the *Reason* of it.

*Non Amore, Sabidi, nec possum dicere
Quare,
Hec tantum possum dicere, Non Amore.*

Are ther *Antipathys* in the *Understanding*? I think this is generally *Attributed* to the *Will*, and it is *Agreed* that it is a *Distinct Faculty* from the *Understanding*. And if ther be *Different Faculties* in the same *Soul*, it *Answers* all the *Purpose* for which I brought that *Parallel*. Nay, if it be but so *Thought*, it do's as well for me, to *Solve* the *Objection* about *Contradiction*, That Men shou'd not think a *Plurality of Persons* in *God* to be a *Contradiction* when the same *Difficulty* arises from a *Plurality of Faculties* in the *Soul*. For *Three Faculties* can no more be *One Faculty*, than *Three Persons* can be *One Person*. And yet these *Different Faculties* make up but *One* and the *Self same Soul*.

(11.) But I have *Sufficiently* *Caution'd* that I intend not to bring any *Proof* from these *Parallels*, Nor lay the *strefs* of the *Cause* upon them, yet I thought them not altogether *Useless*, to shew Men how far they may *Mistake* in *Charging Contradictions*; from one *Nature* to another.

(12.) I have likewise told, That no *Parallel* in *Created Natures* can *Answer Exactly* or *Come up* to the *Nature of God*, only *Point Him* out at a *Great Distance*, and with *Infinite Disproportion*. And therefore that we must not *Argue Strictly* from the *One* to the *Other*. Yet the *Remarker* will not *Observe* this, but *Argues* of the *Persons of God* as of *Human Persons*. And says, p. 4. *If three Divine Persons be like three Human Persons—And if three Divine Persons should as Properly be accounted three Gods, as three Human Persons can, in Strict Speech, be accounted three Men—Thence he infers three Gods &c.*

He

He cannot I think but see the Fallacie of this Argument, after all that I have said. But he will not see it! He will still Argue *Swidly* from the Word *Person*, and Apply it to *God* in the same manner that it is Us'd among *Men*. If he wou'd Apply the word *Father* so, (which himself gives to *God*) or *God's* being said to *Repent*, to *Grieve*, &c. What Work wou'd he make, what *Contradictions* might he Infer? His Brother *Socinian* Mr. *Biddle* (as I have shew'd) turn'd *Anthropomorphis* by this sort of Argument, and from Man being said to be made after the *Image* of *God*, held *God* to have a *Body*, and of *Human Shape*. And he might as well have made Him a *Bird* too, because ther is Mention made of His *Wings* and *Psal.xci.4. Feathers*! This Savours not of the *Sagacity* the *Socinians* think Peculiar to Themselves.

(13.) From the like Gross Conceptions the *Remarker*, p. 7. raises Difficulties how a *Begotten Being* can be *God*. Thinking of *Begetting* after the Manner of *Men*! And then the *Father* must be in *Time*, as well as in *Nature*, before the *Son*. And it having been told him that supposing the *Sun* to be *Eternal*, its *Light* wou'd be as *Eternal*, he Replies, p. 7. That this *Parallel* will not do, for that the *Light* which (says he) *You call an Effect of the Sun, is indeed the very Sun it self, so may well be as Old*. By which the very *Sun* we see in the *Firmament*, and is many times Bigger than the whole *Earth*, can Creep through a *Cranmy*, and be All of it in this Room, and in a Thousand other Places at the same Time! This will help *Trans-Substantiation* not a little! But is it so indeed that this Subtile *Socinian* can see no Diffe-

rence betwixt the very *Sun* it Self, and the *Light* that flows from it? It is then time to have done Disputing with him. And he Runs into as Great *Absurdities* to get Rid of these *Parallels* as he Charges upon me for making Use of them.

He says (as before Quoted, *Self*. 4.) *That when we See the Stars, our Eyes move not up to them, but their extended Rays strike upon the Eye*. But if the *Rays* or the *Light* be the very *Star* it self, then the very *Star* it self *Strikes* upon the *Eye*. Let him Consider whether ther is any thing so very *Gross* as this in any of the *Parallels* I have produc'd. And on whose side lies the poor *Philosophy*, and *Shallow Reasoning*.

(14.) Therefore leaving this Subject, I will now only Answer an Observation he makes from *Scripture*, wherein he says, p. 2. *God Almighty is Perpetually express'd in the Singular Number, Under One, He, Me, Thou, &c*. Now left the Reader of these *Remarks* should be Carry'd away with this, I must mind him, That this *Socinian* says this, without taking any Notice of the *Texts* I have given to the Contrary in the 2d *Dialogue* p. 32, &c. Beginning with the first of *Genesis* where *God* is Spoken of in the *Plural* as well as the *Singular* Number according to the *Hebrew*, *He* is there called *Gods*, and *Us*, as well as *God*, and *Me*. And is He not spoken of in the *Plural* Number in the *Form of Baptism* in the Name of the *Father*, and of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*? The *Remarker* ought to have Mark'd this, and not to have put the *Objection* over again, without saying something to the *Answer* had been made to it.

If this sheet gives him not full Satisfaction, I shall be willing to hear from him again.

Con-

Contents.

1. HIS *Rude* Treatment of me.
 2. The *Argument* I made use of, That we ought not to Infer a *Contradiction* from a *Nature* we Understand, to *Another* which we do not Understand.
 3. His *Answer* as to *Thought* Reply'd to.
 4. And as to a Man Born *Blind*.
 5. Other *Instances* I brought of which he takes no Notice.
 6. I join *Issue* with him as to the *Instance* of a Man Born *Blind*.
 7. What little Ground he had to *Insult* me here.
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 9. His Distinction of our *Partial Knowledge* of God will not do, for we know nothing of the *Nature* or *Essence* of God. Nor indeed of our own or any other *Nature*. And our Dispute is concerning the *Nature* of God, and not of His *Attributes*.
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 11. I make this no *Proof*, nor lay the *Stress* of the *Cause* upon it.
 12. How grossly he Argues from *Human Persons* to the *Divine*. This made *Biddle* turn *Anthropomorphite*.
 13. He makes no Difference betwixt the *Light* and the *Sun*. By which the *Sun* it self comes in to our *Eye*. On whose side lies the *poor Philosophy* and *Shallow Reasoning*.
 14. His Argument that God is *Perpetually* express'd in *Scripture* in the *Singular* Number, shew'd to be otherwise; And he gives no *Answer* to what I have said upon it.
- I invite him to Reply.

F I N I S.



A VINDICATION of the REMARKS upon Mr. Cha. Leslie's First Dialogue on the Socinian Controversy.

S I R,

I Shall hasten over your Preamble, in which you represent me for a *Socinian*, as if every one, who has not so good an Opinion of the Truth of Contradictions as you have, must needs be such; and also your feigning me to be in a *Passion*, for only censuring your weak Arguments, that you might poorly infer thence, I was a *Lofer* by my *Talking*; while a whole Torrent of personal Reflections on the Dead, by whole mouthfuls of Reproach, viz. that *pragmatical Here ick, ignorant Pedant Biddle, Dial. 2. pag. 60.* witnesses the Candor and Tenderness of your *meek, inoffensive Spirit*: All this I wave as little to the purpose, and proceed upon the Argument.

I perceive, by your Answer to the Remarks, that you are resolv'd to found your Scheme of a Trinity on *Mystery* and *Ignorance*, and to cover your self from the *Unitarians* by impenetrable Darknes, which you make your Defence. You seem to admit, that as far as human Reason can judg, there are irreconcilable Contradictions in your Scheme of Faith: and therefore, in order to support your Notions, you endeavor to support the Credit of plain Contradictions; intimating, That we conceive of God no otherwise than as a blind Man of *Sight*, i. e. with a Mind full of Contradictions. To this end

You asserted, that what is a *Contradiction* in one Nature, may be none in another. I affirm the contrary, that a Contradiction, consisting of two repugnant Propositions, is ever the same, apply it to what Nature you will; because the same thing cannot both

be, and not be at once, whether it be said of God or Man.

You attempted to prove your Paradox by the Motion of the Thoughts to *Rome*, &c. and of the *Eyes* to the *Stars* as soon as to the *Chimney-Top*; which, you say, implies the going *two Yards* as soon as one; which is a Contradiction in walking, you grant, but not in the Motion of *Thoughts* and *Eyes*. Now tho I had shewn, that there was really no such Motion in the *Thoughts* or *Eyes*, and you seem to be asham'd of it, and therefore shift off one Part on your Man without *Thought*, which is a contradictory Supposition (which it was time for you to quit, *pag. 2.* and therefore I shall not expose you on it) and another upon some poor blind Man, that your self might not bear the shame of such Folly; yet you are again trumping up your old Instances, and argue from 'em as if they were true; especially from the Motion of *Sight*, and the Impossibility of a *Born-Blind Man's* Conception of *Sight*, any otherwise than by allowing the aforesaid Contradiction (as 'tis in the Motion of the *Legs*) to take place here in the *Eyes*. You ask, *p. 2. How can you explain to him, how the Eye can reach a Star as soon as the Chimney? He feels his Eye with his Hand that 'tis fix'd in his Head; how then can he imagine it gets a thousand Miles off, while he feels it does not stir?* Did ever any Man trifle worse! I tell you, and you seem to admit it, that there is no such thing as the *Eyes moving* a thousand miles; and yet you suppose your blind Man must be falsly told, and must believe it. I don't wonder if the

A

poor

poor abus'd Man conceive that to be a flat Contradiction, which in Truth is so even to a seeing Man, and which he ought not to believe. But does this prove that 'tis no Contradiction to move a thousand Yards as soon as one, because you falsely told him, and he foolishly believ'd you, that your Eyes did move so, when they never cou'd do it, because 'tis a Contradiction? I thought you were to prove a real Contradiction in one Case to be none in another; and now you suppose a Contradiction which is not, and conclude from it as if it truly were. So that

This is in effect your Argument; Supposing the Eyes did move to the Stars as soon as to the Chimny, or your Thoughts to Rome in an instant (as they do not) then here would be an Instance of that being a Contradiction in one Case, *viz.* in *Legs*, which is none in another, *viz.* *Eyes*: but tho there be no such thing in the Premises, yet the Conclusion is true, because it wou'd have been true, if the Premises had been so. No doubt, Sir, you argue very desperately! How does this prove, a Contradiction in one Case may be none in another?

But, say you, 'Tis impossible to explain to him what Sight is, so as to reconcile it from being a Contradiction to him. I answer, that a true and just Explication of it will not contain any real Contradiction in it; and if to him it appears a Contradiction, 'tis from his Mistake alone; and you are not to shew that a seeming Contradiction may be none (for who doubts that?) but that a real Contradiction may, in some Cases, be none. And I pray what Contradiction will appear to him, according to what was said, *That the Eye moves not up, but the Star strikes on the Eye?* To this you say, *The blind Man does not feel this*, p. 2. *nor knows what you mean by it, or by Seeing.* But is this any Contradiction to him, that he shou'd not feel every jubile Particle that touches on him? or that he shou'd have no Idea of Sight? You add, *He can't think of any other way, but that the Eye must get up to the Star, or the Star come down to the Eye.* I expected he cou'd only imagine his Eye went up to the Star, as you had suggested before, to represent the Contradiction of moving so far in an instant; and now you allow him another Conception of Sight, *viz.* *That the Star may extend*

to his Eye. But this is quite another Matter from your Instance of the Eyes going up so many thousand Miles, and has no such Appearance of a Contradiction. Nor will it serve your Turn for an Example of a Contradiction's becoming no Contradiction: So that, it seems, he may be convinc'd another way, than by persuading him, that what is a Contradiction in one Nature is none in another, which you say is the only way, and I that 'tis no way at all; and if he be to be convinc'd this way, he must be suppos'd to have a worse blemish than want of Eye-sight.

The most you can reasonably pretend to here, is, That I can't by my Words help him to form a just Idea of Sight (which is thro his want of necessary Organs) but it does not thence follow, that he ought to take up with a Conception that implies plain Contradictions, which he knows must be wrong, and ought to be rejected: For tho he may not conceive what Sight is (nor is it made his Duty, as in the other Case, to which you parallel it) yet he may be sure 'tis not made up of Contradictions. A Man may not understand a thing, and yet understand very well that Contradictions about it are false; and this is all the Stress I laid upon this Instance. So that this is no Argument against objecting Contradictions to some Mens Notions of the Divine Nature; since in no Case whatever are the blindest Creatures oblig'd to believe direct Contradictions, nor wou'd they become no Contradictions, if they shou'd believe 'em erroneously.

To what purpose then was that saint Triumph, p. 3. *I will join Issue with him upon it, if he can find Words proper to express the Nature of Sight to a Man born blind, and will give him leave to infer Contradictions from such Words, according as he understands 'em; then I will undertake to solve all the Contradictions in the Terms, by which we express the Holy Trimity.* To explain it so as to enable him to form a clear Idea of it in his Imagination, I neither undertook, nor is it his Duty to have such an Idea, much less to take up with any that are false. But still I say, that a true Explication of the Operation of Sight will never lead him to infer Contradictions. If he imagine any in it, which is a certain Contradiction (in other Cases) he

as certainly does not rightly take in the true Explication of *this*, and ought to conclude he is in an Error, and to set himself against it; and must either bring his Thoughts to a Consistency, or explicitly believe nothing in the Matter: for no Man, pretend what he will, does believe apparent Contradictions to be none, or (which is the same) to be possibly true; he must, at least, suspend his Assent.

And yet, I believe, as to matter of Fact, that many such blind Persons, tho they have no distinct Idea of Sight, are very far from entertaining Contradictions about it; at least they would be so, if they had understanding Instructors that did not err, as is suppos'd in your Case; where God is reputed the Teacher of *your Notions* of the H. Trinity, who will hardly be thought to leave any Doctrine upon us, to be believ'd under the unavoidable Notion of a Contradiction.

Therefore if there were no Difference between the two Cases you think to be so like, *viz.* of a blind Man's conceiving such a thing as *Sight*, and your Conception of the Trinity; yet there is no reason from thence for taking up with Contradictions in the latter, since 'tis not requisite nor fit to do so in the former.

Besides, who can easily believe such a Case to be really true in the Christian Dispensation, *viz.* That the All-wise and Good God shou'd impose upon a Generation of Men, *born blind*, a long *Creed*, of the nature of *Light*, and *Refractions*, and Colors, or a *System of Opticks*; of which they could have no manner of Conception, nor make any Use, only it might set 'em together by the Ears in ignorant Contention? Or that ever he would be pleas'd with such of themselves, as shou'd presume to be paraphrasing on *Light and Colors*, &c. in their own *novel devis'd Terms*, which they think more proper and clear, and say, are equivalent to *his* (but being wholly ignorant of the Subject, cannot know what Terms are more or less proper) nay to anathematize and persecute all that assent not thereto? Verily, you insinuate no Honor to your Cause by such an untoward Representation! You own your self blind, and yet you force your Neighbors to take you for their Guide: Therefore, I conclude, Man is not so un-

capable of God's Revelations, as a blind Man of knowing and using the Sun's Light; and I'll suppose you pretend greater Incapacity in Men, and less Benefit from Revelation thereupon, than is true or fit, merely to cover your own Errors, and feign your self blind, that you may be excus'd in holding Contradictions. Tho Blindness it self, as I have shewn, does not constrain us to take that for no Contradiction in one Nature, which is evidently and truly so in another, as you pretend.

After this Absurdity of yours had been expos'd as ridiculous, you would fain hook me into your Company to take share, calling Spectators, p. 4. to *see me confessing what I had ridicul'd*. But why so? Did I say a *Contradiction may sometimes be no Contradiction*? No. I had granted, say you, there may be *something attributed to one Nature, where there is nothing inconsistent or contradictory to it; while, if attributed to another, it might meet with something inconsistent; whence a Contradiction will arise in the one, and not in the other*: And so I say still; only I added what you omit, that *one of the two Terms of a Contradiction is not the Contradiction, but both together are, and are so in any Nature*. And now let as many as you will see, if I say what you had said. Is this all one, to say that a Contradiction (which is two inconsistent Propositions) is sometimes no Contradiction, which is what *You* said; and that one of the Propositions alone is no Contradiction, which is what *I* said? Do I, that say Dependence and Derivation of Being is no Contradiction, when said of a Creature, where is nothing repugnant, say the same as he, that says such Dependence and Derivation may be no Contradiction, when said of the Independent, Self-existent God, and First Cause, where the other repugnant Term is found? As mutual Blows make the Fight, so two repugnant Terms make the Contradiction; and this I say still, on sure Grounds, is always absurd, say it of what Nature you well.

Well, but if I did not say what you said (because you are resolv'd we shall agree) you say you meant the same as I say: That *this is all you contend for, and you desire no more*. But this is not all you contended for, you said *more*, in saying, *a Contradiction in one Nature may be none in another*; nay,

you meant more, if Words can shew your meaning, by your Instance of going two Yards as soon as one; i. e. to go but one Yard, and yet more than one at once. This is your Resemblance, how a Contradiction in one Case may be none in another; that is, two contradictory Propositions may become not contradictory, as if the Verity of Propositions cou'd be chang'd. Nay, I must add, that this is not all you desire, for your Argument needs more to defend it against the Unitarians.

You know they don't deny that some things may be Contradictions, if affirm'd of Men, which are none when said of God; as to be Eternal, or Infinite, is not, with them, a Contradiction when said of God, because 'twere so if said of Man. You were not so weak to argue for what they always asserted; contrariwise, you did suppose the Socinian to charge you with holding two opposite repugnant Propositions, viz. That God is Unoriginate, and yet a deriv'd Nature, is the first Cause, and yet has a Father and a Cause (as the Greek Fathers express it of the Son) that he is but one He, and yet three He's, &c. Now that such sort of Contradictions, if real, can ever be true, you affirm'd, but I never said; and therefore pray don't call me any more to be your Voucher in such a Case; for you certainly intended more than I said or you pretend: and 'tis incumbent on you, either to shew that these are no Contradictions which they object for such, or that they are not chargeable on your Faith; or if they be real Contradictions, that cleave fast to you, yet there is no Absurdity in them, because Contradictions (i. e. two opposite Propositions) may sometimes be none, or not opposite; and that to be, and not be, may sometimes be the same. And then you'll do more towards the reconciling the Gallican and English Churches, than if their two Synods had sat at the same time, or than is done by the Author of the Regale, &c. Transubstantiation will then be a credible Mystery!

And now since I said nothing that has any Likeness to what I expos'd in yours, you need not pretend to wonder, How I can deny, that what is a Contradiction in one Nature, may yet be none in another. I shou'd wonder more, if I did not deny such an Absurdity.

Your other Instance, which you complain

was not taken notice of, viz. That 'tis no Contradiction for all things to be present with God, tho' it be a Contradiction to Men that the past or future things shou'd be present, is to the same purpose as the rest: for in one sense 'tis no Contradiction to either, i. e. for a past thing to be objectively present in the Idea, and so it may be with Man; and in another sense 'tis a Contradiction in both, i. e. to behold that as actually doing now which is past; for so God himself does not behold the original Chaos, as now actually existing void of Form, nor does he judg Adam and Eve to be now in their first Innocency. I doubt some are fond of making abundance of needless Contradictions, on purpose to keep some darling Absurdities of their own in countenance. But tho' I am not so vain as to pretend to reconcile all Difficultys, or to say which side is wrong, much less to fathom the boundless Perfections of my glorious Creator; yet I think it is no Arrogance to say, that I am sure both sides of a Problem, or real Contradiction, cannot be true, about any Object: or if they may be both true, and a Contradiction in one Case be none in another, why will you not have a little Charity, and allow that the Unitarians and you don't contradict each other? But tho, in some Cases, 'twou'd be a Contradiction to affirm and deny the same thing; yet of the Divine Nature to do thus, may possibly be none; and so we are good Friends.

Your next Refuge is, That the Nature of God being incomprehensible, we must not object Contradictions in it, from comparing it with our own, because we understand not his Nature, p. 4. To this I said, it might have some fair Pretence, if we had no Knowledge at all about it; but that we have so much Knowledge, tho' partial, as warrants us to deny what is contradictory to it: hence we justly deny many things for being incompatible to the Divine Attributes, to his Spirituality, Goodness, &c. And why may we not as well discern what is contradictory to the Divine Unity, which is as manifest as the others? You reply, That the Attributes and Nature are different; and this is a Dispute not about God's Attributes, but his Nature, of which we are totally ignorant; that 'tis utter Darkness to us, &c.

I might answer you, That *Essential* Attributes, or Perfections, are the *very Essence* under so many various inadequate Conceptions; that God is not compounded of Essence and Perfections, as of different things, but that his very Nature is Goodness, Power, Wisdom, &c. But I will not obscure my Argument, by entering on *metaphysical* Nicetys. I have enough to say without this: for supposing what you crave, there may be good ground to object Contradictions in this Case; for, 1. The Divine *Unity* is one of his Attributes by consent of all, and so may be argu'd about, and Contradictions may be discern'd and objected here as well as in other Attributes. And, 2. Were it otherwise, yet may Contradictions safely be discern'd and started about the Divine Nature, on these Accounts.

1. 'Tis sufficient for this, if I but know what God *is not* in any respect: All allow one way of knowing God is *per viam Negationis*, by denying of his Nature every thing that argues Imperfection. Now if I do but know what God certainly *is not*, I may then object against any thing that, in contradiction thereto, does affirm him to be what I know he is not. Thus if I know that *Derivation of Being* from any other Cause, is what cannot belong to the first supreme Nature, I may justly object Contradiction to those who shall affirm this unoriginate Nature to have a Cause. If I know his Nature can be but one, I object soberly against them that shall say, there are many supreme Divine Natures. I will object against all Imperfection, as a Contradiction to that ever glorious *Jehovah*: and I must know, in some Instances, what is Imperfection, else I shall not know but God may be *mutable* and *mortal* in his Nature, if I cannot know that there are Imperfections.

2. If I know but any Property or Perfection of his Nature, I may know *that* to be a Contradiction to his Nature, which denies that Perfection or Property. If I know he is a *necessary eternal Being*, I know well that he is of a Nature that *cannot die*. If I know from Reason or Scripture that he is *all-knowing*, I know 'tis a Contradiction to say of him, who *is that Nature*, that he is ignorant of any one thing. Nay,

3. If I knew neither what he *is not*, nor what any Perfection of his Nature *is*; yet

if I knew but what is a Contradiction in the Nature of the thing, and to it self, I may safely say, 'tis a Contradiction when apply'd to God, because 'tis so in it self. Thus *to be* and *not be* at once, to be but *one Jingle Person*, and yet 3 such Persons, being repugnant, may safely be objected for a Contradiction, without any regard to the Nature 'tis apply'd to, because of the mutual repugnancy of the two Propositions, which always destroy one another, and cannot be said of the same thing. So that I don't, in this Case, object a Contradiction in God, from a Supposition that his Nature is resembled by mine, but from the bare Nature of a Contradiction. I may doubt whether God be a pure Spirit, or be only a gross Body; whether my Soul be material or immaterial: but leaving this still in doubt, I am sure 'tis not both *material and immaterial*. And if any one shall say, There are both *many Gods, and but one such God* in Nature; that once he was not in being, but yet eternally was and is to come; I hope, in these Cases (like to which Contradictions the *Socinians* pretend) one needs not stay till he knows perfectly what the Nature of God is, before he pronounces 'em to be Contradictions. And therefore 'twas not rightly said of you, *Dial. 1. p. 7. That no Contradiction can be charg'd in any Nature we don't understand*, especially when your self had granted to the *Socinian*, *That it is a Contradiction to say, Three Persons (in God) are but one Person*; which, I represented to you, was what the *Socinians* charg'd your Scheme with: and therefore you were bound (but would not attempt it) to shew, that this Contradiction is not chargeable upon you; instead of which you cry, a Contradiction in Man may be no Contradiction in God, when 'twas granted 'em, that this were a Contradiction even in God.

Having made it appear, that our Ignorance of the incomprehensible God, does not render us wholly incapable of discovering certain Contradictions in Mens Notions of him, I may conclude you have not taken an effectual Course to convince the *Unitarians*, by saying they must not argue from Contradictions: So that the Matter rests as at the end of the *Remarks, viz.* That it will be expected you shall shew that those and the like Difficultys, objected by *them*,

them, are either not Contradictions, or not truly charg'd on your Faith of a Trinity in God. If you go on to appear so willing to allow 'em those two Points, I dare say you'll gain no Ground.

Besides, let me add these Remarks :

1. That you have laid a fair Foundation for *Scepticism*: for nothing can be said of God, tho' most absurd, which on your Principles can be confuted; because not knowing his Nature, we must not say any thing is a Contradiction to it. Nay, since you say we know not the *Nature of Man* (perhaps he may be three Persons and one Man) nor of *Trees*, or a *Pile of Grass*, we cannot then urge Contradictions about them, and so cannot argue about the Nature of any thing; since all Arguments tend to shew a Contradiction in what we argue against, and so we can prove and be certain of nothing.

Nay, we cannot confute *Transubstantiation*, for we know not the *Nature of Bread and Flesh* (for Sense cannot reach that) and so may not object Contradictions in the Case.

Nay, you can't confute a *Socinian* this way; for you can't tell whether a Denial of a Trinity be not consistent with a Trinity, according to you, because this is about the *Nature of God*: and not understanding that, we must not object Contradictions here. How know you that God is not *three Essences and one Person*? The Scripture says not expressly either this or the contrary.

2. You can never justify any long *Creeds* or *Explications of the Trinity, &c.* in other Words than Scriptural: for how shall Men believe your Pretences of Humility, that you can't comprehend God, when at the same time you are for explaining his Nature in unintelligible Terms, novel, and more obscure than the Scripture? If you don't know the Divine Nature, then be silent about it. How dare you say this or that is equivalent to the Scripture-Terms, or more proper, when that is to be judg'd of by the Nature of the (unknown) Subject? But you are for explaining the Text, and urging that it must have *this and that* sense; sometimes it must be *figurative*, and sometimes literal; and are for scriving Reason as long as you can hold it, and then run to Mystery, when Reason and scholastick Wit are spent; and tell your Adversary, he must

not argue about the incomprehensible God; as if you meant, that you may reason, but only 'tis not fit for a *Socinian's* Reason to meddle; it must be, because their Reason is of a lesser Size.

Nay, is it any great Sign of *Humility of Reason*, to be so confident of your *Deductions*, as to oppress or anathematize such as testify their Dissent from them, tho' they assent to the Text whence you pretend to infer 'em? And how know you whether their Sense and Inferences or yours be truest, since the Terms you say are all but *Allusions*, and that about a Nature you know nothing of? Of all Men such may seem the proudest Exalters of human Reason in matters of Faith, even while they decry and reproach it in their more peaceable Adversarys.

3. You could not confute the Pagan Notions of the Divine Nature your way: supposing they hold many Gods, or that there is but one Divine Nature, and all the thousands of particular Gods but a *multitude of Persons* in that one Nature (as you suppose many Men in but one human Nature) you could not confute 'em by the Light of Reason at least, because you allow not Contradictions to be an Argument here.

For the Honor of Christianity, I beseech you, never insist on it, that to be a *Christian* is to believe, that a *Contradiction may sometimes be none at all*, and that this is the only way to persuade a Man to be such. I thank God I am convinc'd without it.

I shall do you no Injury if I pass by your wonderful Proofs for the Memory's being another *Faculty* from that by which we understand, *p. 5. viz.* That the Understanding is only conversant about what is *present before it*: as if we could not understand any thing that is past, and knew not formerly; or as if the Idea of what is past may not become present to the Understanding, which yet in the next Line you own. You ask, *If the Understanding forgets?* I answer, As much as the Memory. But I have shew'd, that three Facultys in one Mind is no parallel for your Trinity. 'Tis neither a Mystery, nor will it resemble (what the *Unitarians* object to you) how three Persons can be but one Person; unless instead of three Facultys making but one Soul, you had shewn that three Facultys make but one Faculty, or

or three Minds, but one Mind. Nay, you are so tenacious, that whether there be really three Facultys in the Soul or not, you say it does as well for you if it be but thought so. Right or wrong, 'tis all one to you. You will hold to the Conclusion, let what will become of the Premises. This is true Courage!

You find fault, that I will argue strictly from the word Person, as 'tis us'd among Men; when I only shew it does not answer the Parallel in that Point (of three being but one in the same Sense) for which you bring it. And since you use the word Persons for explaining better the Scripture-Language, you must suppose it to be more proper and less ambiguous; and till you give another Sense, I must understand it after the known use of it. You add, pag. 6. *If he would apply the word rather so, and the words Repent and Grieve, that are said of God, what Work would he make? &c.* As to the first Term, I see nothing absurd in it. For the other Terms of Repent, &c. the nature of the Subject bids me give 'em a figurative Sense, and I should not dare to use 'em of God, if the Scripture had not done it, which is not your Case; much less would I put 'em into my *explicatory Creed*. But if at the same time the *Athanasians* would publicly declare, they no more believe three Persons to be in God, than that God can repent or grieve properly; and would give us another fair and open Sense of the Terms, as of the other, that may comport with the Scripture-Account of God, of his Son J. C. and his H. Spirit, and with the rest of their scheme, then you might have some Pretence for talking thus. But if you assign to the Sacred Three all the various Parts and Distinctions of Persons in a proper Sense, and for that reason do give 'em these Characters: How can considering Men think, you don't design by it, to give 'em an Idea of three proper Persons in one eternal He? And you your self deny the Expressions are figurative, p. 25. *Dist. 1.* speaking of such Texts as are alledg'd for a Trinity of Persons.

You are mistaken, in saying, *I raise Difficultys how a begotten Being can be God, from gross Conceptions of begetting after the manner of Men*, pag. 6. I never had a Thought of more than of a Being deriv'd from another, which I think is the allow'd Sense of *Begotten*, as

apply'd to the Lord Jesus, who receives his Nature dependently on the Father, says Dr. *Whitby* on *John 14. 29.* speaking also the Sense of the antient Fathers: So that the Difficulty is no other, than how a deriv'd dependent Being can be God? which the Unitarians insist on much.

You having illustrated the Coeternity of the Son with the Father by this, that the Light is as old as the Sun, tho the Effect of it; I reply'd, That the Light is really the Sun it self. Upon which you set up a hideous Cry, as if I were bringing the whole Sun upon your Head, and fetching it out of the Firmament; even all that huge Sun, that is so many times bigger than the whole Earth: For, say you, *By which we see the very Sun, so many times bigger than the whole Earth, can creep thro a Cranny, and be all of it in this Room, and in a thousand other Places at once: This will help Transubstantiation.* Again, *If the Light be the Star, then the very Star strikes on the Eye; and then you crow merrily. Let him consider on whose side the poor Philosophy and shallow Reasoning lies.* It seems, you imagine, the Sun is not made of Parts; and that if the Sun shines into a Room, it must quit the Firmament, and must come down, all or none. I can't breathe in the Air, I warrant you, without being so unmerciful as to sup it all up; nor say, I stand on the Earth, unless I cover it all over, from East to West. You cannot believe any subtile Streams, or Effluvia of Light, that are a part of that huge luminous Mass, which penetrate small Pores of Bodels. I did not say every Stream of Light was the whole Sun, or that the Parts that are above are beneath. But I fancy you hop'd to find an Instance from me, how a Contradiction in one Case may be none in another: the whole huge Sun in a little Cranny! Ah this subtile Socinian! as you call me. Thus you deride me to your Cost, as *Lactantius* did the *Antipodes*, for going with their Heels upmost.

I heartily wish, Sir, you would entertain the *Coffee Houses* for one Year with a Course of your *Philosophy*. I dare promise you many Admirers; and when that has prevail'd, no doubt but your Divinity will go off.

All the Answer you give to the Objection against three Persons in God, from his being spoken of singularly, as *I, Thou, He*; is,

That

That in the first of *Genesis*, &c. God is spoken of plurally; for instead of *God created*, you say, *Dial. 2.* 'tis *Gods he created*: That three Persons are mention'd, the *Father*, *Word* (because God spake, and Speech contains Words) and *Spirit*, and *these Gods made*, &c. So that if Plurality be express'd, as you say well, 'tis a *Plurality of Gods*; if the Singular be *God*, the Plural is certainly *Gods*. Pray stick to that. 'Tis an obvious Reply to this, that 'tis an usual *Hebraism* to put the *Plural* for the *Singular*; and so Princes and others say *We*, when 'tis but *one*. You say indeed, that, in the Royal Language, *We* notes the King and *his Council*; as if *Our Royal Pleasure*, and *We command*, did relate to any but himself. *Dial. 5.* But to silence you once for all in this matter: Know that this Plural Term *Gods*, *Elohim*, is said of one of the Persons alone; *Psal. 45. 7.* *Thy Throne, O Gods, is for ever and ever*: And, *O Gods, thy Gods have anointed thee*, which the Apostle applies to Christ, *Heb. 1. 9.* Now unless the *Son* have another Trinity in him, the *Plural Word* can't intend three Persons, but one, only it is more majestic.

But what must we say to this, that in the New Testament (the proper Place for this Article) there is not so much as one such Expression, but always *He* in the Singular? It had been *meet* to shew where many Persons ever use the diminutive Language I

and *me*, when you aim at, in telling us, That 'tis said of a King, *He march'd*, &c. when it means *all his Army*: but tho' it supposes all the Army, it does express the King alone, and his Authority, and therefore is Singular; for if three Princes together have the Command, it would no longer be, *He march'd*, but *They*, which shews you are out: So that the Objection (with the greatest part of the Remarks) lies on your Hands still.

As for your Comments on other Texts, they are Arrows shot at *no Mark*, till you state your Notion, whether *three infinite Minds*, or but *one*. Your Explications are precarious, or go no higher than *Arianism*, or are obviated oft in the *Socinian* Comments; and in answering *their* Texts you are as modest (on *John 17. 3.* *1 Cor. 8. 5.*) as if you said nothing. Pray, Sir, tell us whereabouts your Answer is to the Text, of *that Day knows my Father only*, which some cannot find among your answer'd Texts; and yet it was in that *little Book*, which is all that you venture to attack, and no Text is more urg'd by the *Unitarians*. Pardon this Freedom, Sir, in pursuance of your *Desire to hear from me again*; who, I assure you, am acted herein by no Passion, except it be a passionate Desire of seeing our H. Christian Religion rescu'd from the Burden of Contradictions.



